

REVIEW OF TRACTS

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PUBLISHED BY THE

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

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Review.

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IN the former part of Exodus, we have an account of the *miracles*, which Moses and Aaron were commissioned to perform in the presence of Pharaoh, and in several instances, immediately following the record of the miracle, it is added, that the magicians of Egypt did the same things, or attempted to do them, "with their enchantments." We have often thought of this part of the sacred history, in connexion with the manner in which Unitarians are imitating, or are endeavoring to imitate, the various religious operations of the Orthodox. Time was, when they were the avowed enemies of *Foreign Missions*. They pitied; they derided; they disbelieved, and opposed. But now, they have become the advocates of Foreign Missions, and are endeavoring to establish a mission of their own. Once, they were opposed to *Sabbath Schools*—so much so, indeed, that (unless we are greatly misinformed) an attempt was made by leading Unitarians in Boston, to prevent the Schools from assembling in the public school-rooms of the city. But now,

their views, or their plans, are so much altered, that they not only have Sabbath schools among themselves, but are forming *Societies* for their encouragement and benefit.* In years past, they have uniformly set themselves in opposition to *creeds*. "The Bible, the Bible, is the only rule of faith. No creed but the Bible was ever needed, or ought ever to be tolerated." But strange to tell, we have, within these few months, read several distinct *Unitarian Creeds*—each differing as much from the other, as we think they all do from the views of the inspired writers.† Remarks of this nature might be extended to *revivals of religion* (for some Unitarians begin to think very favorably even of revivals)—to special religious meetings during the week—and to evening lectures on the Sabbath. But we hasten to those particular points which are more nearly connected with our present object. Among the very persons, who have been distress

* See Chris. Reg. for March 3, 1827.

† Ibid.

sed and alarmed that other denominations of Christians should associate, in large bodies, for the purpose of supporting and spreading what they conceived to be truth, we now witness an AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION. And the same class of men who, in other circumstances, have had so many doubts and apprehensions, as to the propriety or expediency of publishing religious books, for cheap or gratuitous circulation, are now engaged in circulating what they call "*doctrinal Tracts*,"—"such as contain an exposition or defence of Unitarian Christianity."

Perhaps it may be thought, from the changes which have taken place in the views or plans of Unitarians, that they are becoming very much better, and may be verging towards the principles, as well as the religious operations of the Orthodox. But this conclusion is refuted by two considerations. First, in the changes that have taken place, Unitarians are but accommodating the once proscribed plans of the Orthodox, to the purpose of advancing their own views. The Foreign Missions which they advocate and support must be Unitarian missions; the Sabbath schools must be Unitarian schools; the revivals of religion must be Unitarian revivals—events, by the way, which nobody, we believe, has ever yet had the privilege of witnessing; and all their various operations must be of a high Unitarian character. And in the second place, there is too much reason to fear, that some of their plans of operation were commenced, with a view, chiefly, to *counteract* the plans of the Orthodox. In seasons of revival, in certain places, we have heard of meetings, which their promo-

ters were not ashamed to call "*counteracting meetings*;" and it is not improbable that, with equal appropriateness, particular societies might be denominated counteracting societies; and particular Sabbath schools counteracting schools. Unitarians see the Christian world in motion, and they feel the necessity of doing something themselves. "While other denominations are so much engaged, what will be thought of us, if we remain inactive? And besides, if we do not constitute societies and funds, to retain the resources of our friends among ourselves, they will be given away to others. And not improbably our friends themselves may, in some instances, be induced to leave us."—That we do no injustice to Unitarians, in imputing to them feelings and motives such as these, will appear from the following public statement of reasons, which led to the formation of the American Unitarian Association. "*Living*," say they, "in an age of *unusual religious excitement*, surrounded by *numerous sects*, all of which are *zealously employed in disseminating their peculiar tenets*, we should be wanting in duty to ourselves, and be doing injustice to the doctrines we profess, if we should allow them to fail, in exercising their due influence, for the want of a corresponding zeal and interest. Our exertions," hitherto, "have not been apparent, because insulated; and *the contributions of many of our friends have been thrown into the treasuries of other denominations*, from the want of some proper objects among ourselves, upon which they could be bestowed." (See first Annual Report, &c. p. 15.)

The American Unitarian Association was formed in the spring

or summer of 1825; and on the 30th of June, 1826, its first anniversary was celebrated in Boston. Among other means of promoting its object, the Association has commenced the publication of a series of Tracts. Ten have been already issued, with the following titles, ranged, we believe, in the order intended by the publishers. "*The faith once delivered to the Saints*;" "*One Hundred Scriptural Arguments for the Unitarian Faith*;" "*On Human Depravity, by Edmund Q. Sewall*;" "*Omniscience the Attribute of the Father only, by Rev. Joseph Hulton*;" "*On the Religious Phraseology of the New Testament, and of the present Day*;" "*A Letter on the Principles of the Missionary Enterprize*;" "*The Unitarian's Answer, by Rev. Orville Dewey*;" "*A Discourse on the Evidences of Revealed Religion, by William E. Channing, D. D.*;" "*Causes of the Progress of Liberal Christianity in New England*;" and "*Remarks on a Popular Error respecting the Lord's Supper, by F. W. P. Greenwood*." In addition to these, "*the First Annual Report of the Executive Committee of the Association*," is published and circulated as a Tract; and to this we shall here, for a moment, direct the attention of our readers.

The object of the American Unitarian Association, as expressed in the constitution, is, "to diffuse the knowledge, and promote the interests of pure," (that is, Unitarian) "Christianity, throughout our country." Accordingly, "Unitarian Christians throughout the United States are invited to unite and co-operate with it." With the exception of this exclusive, or sectarian feature, the constitution is not materially unlike those of religious

associations among the Orthodox. The amount contributed in the first year,* although "*larger*," as the Committee inform us, "than has ever before been collected, in the same space of time, by any Unitarian Society," is not, we should think, so great, as to be very encouraging to the friends of the Association, or appalling to others—not so great, as is yearly contributed in some single parishes among the Orthodox, for the promotion of a single object of religious charity.

The most remarkable assertion in this Report of the Committee is, that the object of the American Unitarian Association is not "*to build up a party*;" and that its promoters "*care not for adding to the number of those who merely call themselves Unitarians*;" but their wish is to increase the number of those who are Christians from examination and conviction." (p 24.) If this is true, is it not very strange, that none but "Unitarian Christians are invited to unite and co-operate with the Association—that none but Unitarian societies and ministers, have been assisted from its funds—and that the Tracts, which the Committee are desirous to publish, and which (with perhaps a single exception) they have published, are such as "contain an exposition or defence of Unitarian Christianity? Is it not strange, that a correspondence has been opened in Europe with Unitarians merely; and that agents have been employed to explore our own country, not to seek out the spiritual wastes, but to find and encourage Unitarians? In short, there never was an institution more openly sectarian, in all its movements and operations,

* \$1272,72.

than this American Unitarian Association. Its object plainly is, not so much to make Christians, as to make Unitarians—not so much to disseminate and establish the Christian faith, as to promote private sectarian views. And it is ridiculous for its Committee to say, in face of all their doings, that their design is not “to build up a party;” and that they “care not for adding to the number of those who call themselves Unitarians,” so much as “to increase the number of those who are Christians, from examination and conviction.”

It is evident from this Report, as well as from various other sources, that a connexion is sought by the Unitarians of Massachusetts, with the *Christians* of the Southern and Western States.* We know not but this connexion will actually take place, and, so far as we are personally concerned, we care not. We have as little sympathy with one of these denominations, as we have with the other. But sure we are, that before the union is consummated, there must be great alterations in one or the other of the parties; or the mixture must be of a very singular character. At present, we could as well conceive of fire and water harmoniously commingling; or of the torrid and frigid zones’ sharing common climate, and yielding common productions, as of an agreeable and harmonious union between the bawling, illiterate, self-de-

* “The Committee have watched, with peculiar interest, the growth of the *Christian* connexion, which is daily becoming more numerous and respectable. From members of that body, they have received expressions of fraternal regard; and although there should not be a more intimate union between these disciples and ourselves, than now exists, yet we rejoice that they have the same great work at heart.” Report, p. 10.

nominated *Christians*; and the cool and speculating Unitarian gentry of Boston and Cambridge.

The first Tract in the series under consideration is entitled, “*The Faith once delivered to the Saints.*” It is written sermon-wise, and doubtless was originally a sermon from the third verse of the Epistle of Jude. It is a genuine specimen of attempting by enchantment what Moses accomplished with his rod; or, in other words, it is a Unitarian imitation of the celebrated sermon of Dr. Beecher from the same text, and was published, we have no doubt, with a view to detract from the influence of that sermon. The author first gives us his own views of “the faith once delivered to the saints;” and then offers reasons derived, not from a direct recurrence to the Scriptures themselves, but from collateral considerations, to show that his system is indeed that of the inspired writers. In the view which he gives us of “the faith once delivered to the saints,” we have one of those singular productions, a *Unitarian creed*. To this creed, the more importance is to be attached, as it comes, not from an individual merely, but in a sense from the whole Unitarian body, and may be regarded as a concise expression of their sentiments. In its “more naked and compact form,” it is as follows:

We believe “that there is one God over all—that Jesus is the Son of God, the predicted Messiah—that man is placed here in a state of probation—that the Gospel is the final dispensation of religion—originating in the compassion of God for his sinful offspring, and founded in the placability of his nature—having for its object to make men holy, that they may be happy—establishing, as the terms of pardon and acceptance, faith, repentance of sin, and obedience of life—using for its means the labors, instructions, and institutions of Jesus Christ—and asserting

the sanctions of a future state of retribution." - p. 6.

In remarking upon this creed, we should object, not so much to what it contains, especially if we might be allowed to put our own construction upon the words, as to what it does not contain. We are under as much obligation to receive *all* divine truth, as we are any; and (if called to be teachers) to declare the *whole* counsel of God, as we are to publish any part of it. "*All* Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is" *all* "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness;" and to take detached portions of the system of revealed truth, and endeavor to pass them off as comprising the whole, is scarcely less treason to our Lord and Master, than to publish those things as truth, which are manifestly false. Suppose a person comes forward with these two articles—"There is one God over all, and Jesus Christ is the predicted Messiah;" would it be sufficient to entitle him to Christian confidence, that a sense could be put upon his words, in which they were acknowledged on all hands to be true? Should we not wish to know farther, whether these articles comprised *all* the truth which he gathered from his Bible? Suppose, then, that he should add to them the two following articles—"Man is placed here in a state of probation, but will enter at death on a state of retribution;" would not the same inquiry still remain? 'Undoubtedly what you have said is true; but is this *all* the truth? Is this *all* that your Bible teaches you, and *all* that your Lord commissions you to teach?"

We would not be understood

as expressing our full assent to every thing *contained* in the above Unitarian creed, taking the words in their most obvious sense; but we do protest against passing off such a kind of detachment from the articles of religious truth—so expressed too as to mean almost any thing, or nothing—as the grand system which Christ came from heaven to reveal. Here, it will be seen, is nothing explicit concerning the moral perfections of God—nothing of his purposes—nothing of the revealed mode of his existence, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—nothing of the inspiration of the sacred Scriptures—nothing of the natively sinful and lost state of man—nothing of the atonement—nothing of the necessity of regeneration by the influence of the Holy Spirit—nothing of justification by faith alone—nothing of the perseverance of the saints—nothing of the eternal punishment of those who persist in sin—and, in short, little or nothing of any of those great truths, which constitute the distinguishing glory of the Gospel. And yet we are told that the creed above given comprises "the *substance* of the faith once delivered to the saints"—"those general and *fundamental traits*, which constitute it what it is, and which cannot be removed or denied, without affecting its essential character."

We proceed now to examine the *arguments* adduced by the writer of the Tract, to show that his system of faith is indeed that of the inspired writers. The *first* is derived from "the *plainness* and *intelligibleness* of this system." It is characterized by greater *simplicity* than that of the Orthodox.—Admitting the truth of what is here stated, the two

following questions will arise: first, is the simplicity of any religious system sufficient evidence of its truth? And second, do the Scriptures represent the Christian system as one of pre-eminent simplicity? But neither of these questions, we are confident, can be answered in the affirmative. Of all systems claiming to be called religious, that of pure *Deism* is perhaps the most simple. But is this a sufficient reason for regarding it as true? Or if we could suppose a Christian, whose creed should contain but the two following articles—"There is one God, and Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah;" his system would be sufficiently simple; but would this prove that it contained all necessary truth?—And, if we are not greatly deceived, the inspired writers do not represent the Christian system, as one of pre-eminent simplicity. The apostle indeed expressed a fear to his Corinthian brethren, lest the false and judaizing teachers should corrupt them "from the simplicity that is in Christ." In other words, he feared, lest these false teachers would draw them away from their *simple dependance* upon Christ for pardon and salvation, and lead them to trust in the abolished ceremonies of the Jewish law. But this passage (so often in the mouths of Unitarians) goes not a step towards proving that the Christian system, taken as a whole, is one of great simplicity. And there are many passages, we think, which represent the contrary. "Great is the *mystery* of godliness." "*Which things the angels desire to look into.*" "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he *might have mercy upon all.* O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How

unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways *past finding out!*"* In these, and the parallel passages, which are numerous, the scheme of divine mercy revealed in the Gospel is represented as involving considerations incomprehensible and inscrutable to human capacities—with which the minds of angels are engaged, and into which they "desire to look." And were there no other argument against the Unitarian hypothesis, the consideration of its boasted simplicity—that it is such a scheme as man might have contrived, and as man can fathom; and that there is nothing pertaining to it to denominate it a great mystery; to demand the attention and scrutiny of angels; and to call forth those expressions of wonder and astonishment which often dropped from the lips of the admiring apostle—this single consideration, were there no other, so far from indicating its truth, might be sufficient to overthrow it.

The second argument in favor of the Unitarian creed is, "that it is constituted of articles, in which all believers of every name are agreed; it occupies the *common ground* of Christians."—If the consideration here suggested proves any thing to the purpose, it must be on the following assumed principle; that *whatever is undisputed in religion is true*; or that *doctrines are to be regarded as truth, so far only as they are the matter of universal acquiescence.* And the standard of truth on this ground will be, not the Scriptures, but the *universal agreement of men.* But who does not see that this is a false standard; or rather that it is no standard at all? Mankind agree to-day, and disagree to-morrow. What one

* 1 Tim. iii. 16. 1 Pet. i. 12. Rom. xi. 33.

generation approves, another rejects. And if we have no standard of truth, but the universal agreement of men, clearly we have none at all. We do not admit indeed that the Unitarian creed "is constituted of articles, in which all believers of every name are agreed." With all its generality and ambiguity of expression, it contains several things, from which many, who claim to be regarded as Christians, would dissent. But suppose this were not the case—suppose it did "occupy the common ground of Christians;" this would be no evidence of its truth, unless it could be shown that the common ground of Christians in different ages, has been the same—that it is, *ipso facto*, the right ground—and that the agreement of men, rather than the word of God, is the ultimate standard in matters of faith.

It is urged, in the third place, in favor of the Unitarian creed, that this "is most agreeable to the *obvious meaning* and *general tenor* of the New Testament." As this proposition is supported by the mere assertion of the writer, it might be sufficient to reply to it by a contrary assertion. But we cannot, without doing violence to our own feelings, as well as injustice to the cause of truth, dismiss the subject with such a reply. It is our most sober conviction, that "the *obvious meaning* and *general tenor* of the New Testament," is decidedly *unfavorable* to the Unitarian system; and we hope to show, in few words, that this conviction is not entertained without sufficient reason. And if this is not the case—if the obvious meaning of the New Testament, as presented to the common reader, is not unfavorable to the

Unitarian system; then why so much pains-taking among Unitarians to circulate what is falsely denominated an "Improved Version?" Why so much labor, by means of "various readings," and "conjectural emendations," to get rid of certain obnoxious portions and passages of the written word? And why such various and fruitless efforts to explain away a large class of passages, which can be disposed of by no other means?—But what is the language of the New Testament on several of the points at issue between Unitarians and ourselves;—and, first, on the *Divinity* of the Saviour? "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "Christ, who is over all, God blessed forever." "We are in him that is true, even in his Son, Jesus Christ; *this is the true God*, and eternal life." "Who thought it not robbery to be *equal with God*." "Thy throne," saith the Father to the Son—"thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." "All men should *honor the Son*, even as they honor the Father." "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the *Almighty*." "I am he who searcheth the reins and the heart." "Jesus Christ the

* Those who wish to see several noticeable exemplifications of the Unitarian mode of explaining away the Scriptures, may find them by recurring to articles headed "Biblical Criticism," in Nos. 30, 31, and 32, of the Christian Register for 1826. In the last of these articles, the writer, remarking upon the declaration of the apostle, (Col. i. 16, 17,) that by Christ "were all things created," &c. says, "No RESEMBLANCE OF WORDS is alone adequate to support the opinion that what is here said of Christ, is precisely that which is affirmed of *Jehovah*, in the Old Testament." But what is this but saying, "Words cannot teach the doctrine, that Christ is the creator of the world. Language cannot express the proper Divinity of the Saviour."—With writers such as this, to urge proof-texts surely must be of little consequence.

same, yesterday, to-day, and forever." "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made." "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things; and by him all things consist." "At the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth." "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts, and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain*, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, *Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the LAMB FOREVER AND EVER.*"*—Our readers have

* John i. 1. Rom. ix. 5. 1 John v. 20.

here a specimen of the plain language of the New Testament in regard to the *Divinity of the Saviour*. And without a single note or comment, we may safely leave it for them to decide, as to "the obvious meaning" of the inspired writers.

And when their decision on this point is formed, we will ask them to consider farther the language of the New Testament relative to the subject and object of the *Saviour's death*. "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Believers are said to be "justified by his blood;" and to "have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." "Whom God hath set forth, to be a PROPITIATION, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Christ is said to have "given himself for our sins;" to have "suffered for our sins;" to be the "propitiation for our sins;" to have "purged our sins;" to have "died for our sins;" to have "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;" and to have "borne our sins in his own body on the tree." His "blood cleanseth us from all sin." "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be glory and dominion, forever and ever. Amen."†—In these Phil. ii. 6. Heb. i. 3. John v. 23. Rev. i. 3, and ii. 23. Heb. xiii. 8. John i. 3. Col. i. 16, 17. Phil. ii. 10. Rev. v. 8—13. † Mat. xxvi. 28. Acts, xx. 28. Rom. v. 9. Eph. i. 7. Rom. iii. 25. Gal. i. 14. 1 Pet. iii. 18. 1 John ii. 2. Heb. i. 3. 1 Cor. xv. 3. Heb. ix. 26. 1 Pet. ii. 24. 1 John i. 7. Rev. v. 9, and i. 5.

passages, we see the manner, in which the writers of the New Testament every where speak of the blood—the death of Christ; and we may safely appeal to unprejudiced readers, as to the obvious import of their language. Did Christ die, as a mere *martyr*, in attestation of the truth of his doctrines? or did he suffer, as an *atonement sacrifice*, to make expiation for our sins? Did he shed his blood, for some unrevealed and indescribable purpose? or was it to show forth the righteousness of God; that so he might be just to himself, and yet the justifier of those who believe in Jesus?

Did our limits permit, we might proceed to give the language of the New Testament, on the subject of election—of human depravity—of regeneration by the special influence of the Holy Spirit—of justification by faith—of the perseverance of saints—and of future eternal punishment. We have no fear at all as to the result of an examination of this nature. We have read the New Testament for ourselves, and can judge for ourselves, at least of its more obvious meaning. Its divine authority is rejected by infidels, and philosophical critics, on the very ground that it contains the hated doctrines of the Orthodox faith; and we have no doubt that, were it confessedly a human production, it would be condemned and despised by Unitarians generally, as being of a high Orthodox character.

But we hasten to the *fourth* argument, in favor of the Unitarian creed, which is, that “the most important *corruptions* which have crept into the records of our faith, have been of a character to favor an *opposing system*; and that the more the Scriptures

are restored to the precise words of their writers, the greater is the support which they give to the *rational system*.”—On the “various readings” of the sacred Scriptures we shall say but very little; for, so far as respects the subject under consideration, we think them of very little consequence. One of the best judges now living* has remarked respecting them, that “out of some eight hundred thousand various readings, about seven hundred and ninety nine thousand are of just about as much importance, as the question in English orthography is, whether the word *honour* shall be spelled with the *u*, or without it. Of the remainder, some change the sense of particular passages or expressions, or omit particular words, or phrases, or insert them; but not one doctrine of religion is changed; not one precept is taken away; not one important fact is altered, by the whole of the various readings collectively taken.”

And if it should appear from an examination of the text of Griesbach that some two or three passages read less favorably to the Orthodox system, than they do in the received text, this is no more than might reasonably be expected; as it was an acknowledged rule of Griesbach, in preparing his Testament, that “amongst various readings, that which, beyond the rest, manifestly *favours the Orthodox*, is *deservedly suspected*.”† What could have led him to adopt such a rule, it is not our province to decide; but the influence of it, so far as it could apply at all, is very obvious; and renders every alteration, which it could have induced

* Professor Stuart.

† Vol. 1, page 13, Cambridge Edition.

him to make, of no possible authority.

The *fifth* argument for the Unitarian faith is derived from the manner in which it has been opposed. "The favorite and prevailing method" of opposition—so says the writer of the Tract—"has been to raise an outcry against it, and hinder men from fairly examining it."—The truth of this charge, as it is *here expressed*, we shall of course deny; and we challenge the author to support it by sufficient proof. The Orthodox have indeed represented Unitarianism as a false and delusive system of doctrine—as another Gospel—and as eminently calculated to blind and destroy the souls of its votaries. They have made such representations, because they most sincerely believe them to be true. And with this view, they have endeavored, in some instances, to keep their children and dependants—those under their care and influence, from being infected and ruined by it. They have felt that, with no appearance of consistency or propriety, they could do otherwise. But does all this prove Unitarianism true? Is every thing true, which the Orthodox regard as false? Or is every thing fair, and lovely, and of good report, which they think is directly the opposite? Is their intellectual and moral vision so notoriously perverted, that it is a sound argument, in face of the world, in favor of any religious system, that they regard it as unscriptural and dangerous? The Orthodox reject and condemn Deism, and Mahometanism, and Judaism, and all the forms of Pagan idolatry. But does this fact go to establish the truth of these various and diverse schemes of pretended religion? Or is the

dissent of the Orthodox from the religious opinions of Unitarians, and their regarding these opinions as dangerous and ruinous, to be urged as an argument in favor of their truth?

The *sixth* argument in favor of the Unitarian faith is "found in the fact, that this is the system adopted by a great portion of those who are educated in *another* faith, and who have always had *another system* preached to them." They are, it seems, though they know it not, *Unitarians*; and "have no idea of any different religious principles, from those which" Unitarians inculcate.—This argument—if it be not an abuse of words to call it argument—it will be seen, at once, is sheer assertion; and an assertion too that will disgust and astonish all those of whom it is made. It is an assertion, we are sure, which they will not be very ready to admit, as it is made without any attempt at proof, and as it contradicts the most sober convictions of their own minds. We were at a loss, at first, to account for it, that such an assertion should ever have been hazarded; and we can now account for it, only on the ground of the misconceptions and misrepresentations of Unitarians, in regard to the real system of the Orthodox. They never represent our sentiments fairly, and seem unable, or unwilling, to conceive of them as they are. In the Tract before us, every representation attempted to be made of Orthodox principles is no better than a caricature. Expressions are used, or a coloring is given, to which no man, in his senses, would be willing to subscribe. Doubtless, when Unitarians inquire of one, who has been educated in the Orthodox

faith, whether he receives that faith in the manner in which it is represented by them; he will answer, no. He has no idea of such a system. He "counts it a slander to attribute to him such a faith, and holds it unfair and ungenerous to charge him with maintaining such dogmas." But what does this confession prove? Not that Orthodox principles, as received and inculcated by their abettors, are untrue; but merely that these principles are misrepresented and slandered, in the lips of their enemies.

The *seventh* argument in favor of Unitarian sentiments is, that "these are the views of Christian truth, into which men have been prone to *settle down*, wherever inquiry has been left perfectly free, and no persecution or loss could attend their profession. So it was at *Geneva*; and so it has been "in *Boston* and its vicinity."—We are a little surprised that the Unitarians of Geneva should be referred to in this connexion. Do the Unitarians of "Boston and its vicinity" intend, indeed, to claim affinity with their brethren of the Swiss Cantons? Do they know the extent to which these boasted brethren are now chargeable with the odious and horrible crime of persecution? that, in the nineteenth century, and to the disgrace of Protestantism throughout the world, they are deposing and banishing able and faithful ministers of Christ, for no crime, but that of disagreeing with them in their religious views? What if the Orthodox churches of Scotland, England, or the United States, were chargeable with a similar outrage upon the rights of Unitarians? Would the world be able to contain the story of their wrongs? And yet the Uni-

tarrians of Geneva are here referred to, without a note of censure, as brethren in good fellowship with those of our own country.* But to return to the argument;—we have no doubt, that, in seasons of worldly rest and prosperity, there has been a tendency in some churches towards the Unitarian faith; just as there was a tendency, uniformly, among the ancient Israelites, in seasons of outward rest and peace, to forget and forsake the Lord; and just as there was a tendency, in the primitive Christian churches, when rescued from the fires of Pagan persecution, and established in quiet, upon the throne of the Cæsars, to adopt a pompous and worldly religion. But what does this tendency of things prove? That Unitarianism is the true religion; or that it is false? that it is adapted to sustain the sinking soul, in times of worldly calamity and trial; or that it is adapted to gratify a careless and worldly spirit?

The *eighth* argument in favor of Unitarianism is derived from "the *moral* and *practical* character of the system." It is thought to be eminently moral and practical, because it insists upon the *preceptive* parts of the Bible, to the neglect of its *doctrines*. "It is satisfied to know what God requires of us, without making it essential that we should understand all the designs of the divine administration." But are Unitarians yet ignorant, that the *doctrines* of revealed religion lie at the foundation of its *duties*? that they set forth the *reason* of them, and the *motives* by which they are enforced? How can the

* An attempt has been made in the Christian Examiner for Jan. and Feb. 1827, to *palliate*, if not *justify*, the late persecutions at Geneva.

duty of *repentance* be strongly enforced, without inculcating the doctrine of *depravity*? or the duty of *loving* and *confiding* in the *Saviour*, without setting forth his *Divinity*, and his *atoning blood*? or the duty of *obeying the divine law* generally, without insisting upon the fearful *penalty* of disobedience? The very reason here urged, to show that Unitarianism must be an eminently practical system, is sufficient to show that it cannot be such a system. And the invariable result of it, wherever it has been generally adopted, goes to confirm us in this conclusion. We know, indeed, that there are many moral and amiable men among Unitarians; but Dr. Priestley admitted, in respect to the mass of them, that "their moral conduct, though decent, is *not what is deemed strict and exemplary*;" and that those who hold evangelical principles, "have less apparent conformity to the world, and seem to have more of a real principle of religion."*

The *ninth* and last argument in favor of Unitarianism is, that "*unbelievers and men of the world* are compelled to look upon it with *approbation and respect*."—We are truly astonished, that an argument such as this should be urged in support of any religious system. Do the scriptures represent that "unbelievers, and men of the world," are accustomed to look upon the *true religion*, "with approbation and respect?" Or do they everywhere represent the contrary? "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews, a *stumbling block*; and unto the Greeks, *foolishness*." "Every one that doeth evil *hateth the light*." "Ye seek to kill me,

a man that hath told you the *truth*, which I have heard of God: This did not Abraham."—The fact alleged in the argument under consideration, we freely admit. We believe and know it to be true. And this is one among the many marks, that Unitarianism is *not* "the faith once delivered to the saints"—is *not* the religion of the Gospel. It is a system suited to the tastes and dispositions of the irreligious and worldly. It proves itself suited, not to humble such characters in the dust, and lead them to beg for delivering mercy; but, on the contrary, to nurture their pride, quiet their consciences, and render them easy and happy in their sins. But such was not a trait of that holy religion, which Christ came to reveal, and which his apostles labored to establish.

We have now gone through with the nine "strong reasons" of the writer of this Tract, for supposing that Unitarianism is "the faith once delivered to the saints." What weight will be attached to them, or to our remarks respecting them, in the minds of our readers, we will not venture to predict. They have received as much attention, perhaps, as they deserve—certainly as much as our limits will allow us to bestow.

Before dismissing this Tract, we will subjoin a few words relative to a passage in it, on the death of Christ. "We admit," says the writer, "because it is revealed, the connexion of the Saviour's sufferings and death, with the extension of pardon and salvation to unworthy man; but we do not pretend to explain, or to *understand* fully, that connexion. We think it enough to rejoice in the *fact*, that the divine mercy is thus exercised, without explaining the

* Discourses on Various Subjects, pp. 95, 96.

secrets of the divine administration, or presuming to say that God cannot, or can, pardon, in this or that way." (p. 11.) We here see, that Unitarians, as well as others, can believe, what they "do not pretend to explain, or to understand." They can rejoice in a revealed fact, without pretending to comprehend the manner, in which such fact exists. But if they can do this in respect to one thing, why not another? And if they can do it, why may

not others do the same? Why may not Trinitarians believe the fact, because they think it revealed, that in the one eternal Jehovah, there are three distinctions, commonly called persons; although they "do not pretend to explain, or to understand," the manner, in which that fact exists?

The remaining Tracts, in the series, will be examined in our future numbers, as opportunity presents.

No. II.

THE next Tract, in the series to be examined, is the "*One Hundred Scriptural Arguments for the Unitarian Faith*." A most formidable title, surely! And, if titles were a legal substitute for proof, one that must settle the whole question! For who would presume to dispute, or so much as to doubt, in opposition to "one hundred scriptural arguments!"—But since the goodness of a cause depends, not so much upon the number of the arguments adduced in support of it, as upon their soundness; and since arguments denominated scriptural are not always so in reality, nor are always pertinent; we may regard the Tract before us, like every other human performance, as standing upon its own merits, and as being fairly open for examination and remark.

And in looking over its "one hundred scriptural arguments," we find at least *ten*, which have no sort of claim to be thus denominated. They neither contain any passage of Scripture, nor refer to any, but are the mere assertions of the writer. These

assertions are some of them sufficiently wide from the truth, and easily susceptible of refutation; but as we have ninety "scriptural arguments" still remaining to be disposed of, we shall readily be excused in suffering them to pass.

Of the ninety remaining arguments, *eighty five* go to prove this merely—that *Christ is, in some sense, distinct from, and inferior to, the Father*. But this point is as essential to Trinitarian theology, as it can be to Unitarian. We firmly believe there is a sense, in which Christ is distinct from the Father, and in which his Father is greater than he; and instead of feeling pinched by the numerous passages which may be urged in proof of this, we feel supported and strengthened by them. Instead of wishing to be rid of these passages, we should feel constrained to contend with any denomination of Christians, who should manifest a disposition to wrest them from us. And if passages of this nature are to be counted arguments in favor of the Unitarian faith;

the writer of the Tract might have increased their number to five hundred, as well as to one.

Of the five arguments still remaining, *one* (the eighty sixth) infers, since Christ was visible while here on earth, and since "no man hath seen God at any time," that Christ was not a divine person; just as if Trinitarians believed, that he, who was, in one sense, "the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace," was not, in another, the "child born," and the "Son given"—the visible partaker of flesh and blood. *Two* (the second and eighteenth) insist, from the passages in which the Father is spoken of as the "one God," and "the only true God,"* that there can be no sense in which Christ is God. But a moment's reflection may satisfy any one, that the Father is spoken of as the "one God," and "the only true God," in contradistinction to the *idols*, or pretended *divinities* of the heathen, and not in opposition to him whom we are required to honor "even as we honor the Father." "There be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth; but to us, there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

Of the two arguments not yet noticed, *one* (the fifteenth) is no argument at all, but an attempt at answering the Trinitarian argument derived from the declaration of our Saviour, that he and his Father were one; and the *other* (the seventeenth) has no direct bearing on the subject, as the passage referred to (1 Tim. vi. 15,) does not determine, whether the person spoken of as

"the blessed and only Potentate who alone hath immortality," be the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghost, or more probably the one glorious Being, whom these three equal and divine persons, in their mysterious union, constitute.

We have thus examined—rather summarily it may be supposed, but we think at as great length as they deserve—the famous "one hundred scriptural arguments for the Unitarian faith." *Ten* of them, we have found, are the mere assertions of the writer; *eighty eight* prove nothing to the purpose for which they were adduced; and the *two* remaining are founded and builded upon a mistaken interpretation of the Scriptures.

It would be easy to show, were it worth the time, that some of the arguments, which the writer of this Tract has thought to array against Trinitarianism, are in palpable contradiction to his own sentiments. Take the following as an example. The point to be proved is thus stated at the commencement. Jesus Christ, "*though exalted far above all other created intelligences*," is a being distinct from, inferior to, and dependent on, the Father Almighty." In proof of this point, the fifty eighth argument alleges "that Jesus was made a *little lower than the angels*."* Now it might require another hundred arguments to show how the fact that "Jesus was made a *little lower than the angels*," is proof that, though a creature, "he is exalted far above all other created intelligences;" or, in other words, how the fact that he was made *lower* than the angels, is proof that he was made *higher* than the angels.

* We recommend this passage (Heb. ii. 9,) to the particular consideration of those who, rejecting the human nature of Christ, regard him as a supremely exalted creature.

* John xvii. 3, and 1 Cor. viii. 6.

We here dismiss this far famed Tract—which has travelled, we are told, to India, and has been reprinted at the press of Rammo-bun Roy*—with the remark, that though it may, in some instances, mislead the unthinking and ignorant, it can have no effect upon those, whether Trinitarian or Unitarian, unless indeed it be to disgust them, who are capable of judging of the pertinency and force of scriptural arguments, and who have an enlarged acquaintance with theological subjects.

The *third* Unitarian Tract is entitled a "*Discourse on Human Depravity, by Edmund Q. Sewall.*" The principal object of the Discourse is to disprove the doctrine of "*native hereditary depravity*;" but "before entering on this main design," the author "suggests some remarks on *total depravity*, which gives us," he says, "as false a view of the *degree* of sin found among men, as the other does of its *origin*." In our review, we shall invert this order of procedure, reserving what we have to offer on the subject of *total depravity*, till the last.

In entering upon a consideration of the other part of the subject, it is of prime importance to determine what Mr. Sewall *means* by "*native hereditary depravity*." And to preclude all danger of misrepresenting him, it will be safest to allow him to speak for himself.

Mr. S. describes the doctrine of native depravity as holding and teaching, that God "has sent us into life, with our souls in such a state, that we are *utterly incapable* of the very purpose for which alone we have souls," (p. 21,)—that he "has made us with a nature which is *incapable* of goodness, and then inflicts endless tor-

ments on us, for not being good," (p. 28,)—that "we sinned sixty centuries before we began to live;" and "are guilty of that, which, but for history, we never should have known," (p. 22,)—that "uncounted millions are laid under the wrath and curse of God forever, in consequence of a single offence of a man, who lived ages before they were born," (p. 22,)—that "having given us a nature entirely corrupt, incapable of good, and prone to all evil, God placed us in this world, with a command to do, what he knows we cannot do; and then condemns us to eternal wo, for doing that which he knows we cannot help doing," (p. 27,)—that "we come into life with a fixed character, and are, at the first, decidedly, entirely, and for aught we can do *incurably* wicked,"—that "we deserve hell, as soon as we are born, and can never deserve more"—that "our doom is decided at the outset, and cannot be the consequence of a trial which it precedes," (p. 29,)—that "all men are liable to eternal wo, as soon as they come into the world," (p. 31,)—that "we can lose nothing," in our state of trial, "since all was lost at the beginning; and can gain nothing, since all we do prior to regeneration is done in vain,"—that "we are not made worse, by the neglect of moral means, for it is impossible to be more than totally depraved; and are not improved by the use of them, for that would detract from the sovereignty of divine grace, to which, as the sole unaided cause, all change for the better is attributed," (p. 30,)—that "man is, by his nature, *utterly unable* to observe" the divine precepts, (p. 33,)—that "the sins of men" proceed

* See Chris. Examiner, Vol. iii. p. 522.

"from a cause, which God alone could have hindered; and which God alone can remove," (p. 27,)—"that God gave us, at first, a ruined nature, and sent us, helpless and abandoned, into a waste howling wilderness, with no capacity to do good, and condemned to woes eternal for doing evil," (p. 42,)—"that the judgment is already completed, when we begin the race of life, and cannot be reversed by all we may perform"—and that "a sentence was passed, ages ago, on the whole race, by which we are liable to the pains of hell," (p. 34.)

Such is a specimen of the language in which Mr. S. describes the doctrine of native depravity; and such is the doctrine, against which he has urged six long and labored arguments. It is little to our purpose to examine his arguments, or to inquire whether he has refuted the doctrine, or not. Suffice it to say, that it is such a doctrine (in his statement of it) as we do not believe, and as we do not think any body else ever did believe. It is a creature of his own fancy—a "man of straw," or of some worse material, of his own creation; and if he has succeeded in destroying it, he has saved us the trouble, and is entitled to all the glory which can result from such a conquest.

In reviewing this part of Mr. Sewall's labors, two things suggest themselves as matter of regret. The one is, that he has allowed himself to publish such statements, as the real sentiments of the Orthodox. If he knows our sentiments he has wilfully misrepresented them; and if he does not know them, he ought to have informed himself, before he attempted to describe and refute them. As the matter stands,

he has done us great injustice; or rather, he *would* have done us great injustice, were it not that his representations are so horribly extravagant, that no sober person, who knows us, will be likely to give them the least credit.

But we urge farther, as matter of still more serious regret, that Mr. S. has allowed himself to write and publish with such revolting levity, on some of the most fearful truths of our holy religion. He customarily speaks of "endless torments"—of "woes eternal"—of "the wrath and curse of God forever"—and of "the pains of hell," very much in the style of bar-room eloquence, and in a manner altogether unbecoming, we do not say a minister of Christ,* but a believer in divine revelation. He ought to have known that these are awful subjects—that they are so regarded by all the inspired writers—and that to treat them with his sort of lightness and banter, is to trifle with the most solemn things.—And these charges, which we feel compelled to urge against the writer of this Tract, lie with an almost equal weight against those who have published, and who are engaged to circulate it. It comes before us, not on the responsibility of an individual merely, but of the American Unitarian Association; and it is so highly valued by "the Executive Committee" of that body, that they consented to give *thirty five dollars* for the liberty of publishing it.* They will not complain, therefore, that we lay the injustice of its representations, and the irreverence of its language, in part at least at their own door.

In entering upon a considera-

* See First Annual Report, p. 5.

tion of *total depravity*, as treated by Mr. Sewall, we have to repeat the charge, already urged, of *misrepresenting* the sentiments of his opponents. He speaks of total depravity as implying, that all the *external conduct* of unrenowned men is, in itself, improper and vicious. This doctrine "excludes every good feeling, desire, purpose, and *action*, and makes the character of mankind consist solely of bad dispositions, passions, and *deeds*." From the day of their birth, they "have had in their minds nothing pure, and in their *conduct* nothing right." (p. 4.)—Now the believers in total depravity do not represent the subject after this manner. They readily admit, that the conduct of sinners is, in many instances, outwardly virtuous. They may be, not only just and honest, but kind and generous. They may be good neighbors, good citizens, and good friends. And the objection to them, in such instances, is not so much to what they are externally, as internally—not so much to what they are in the sight of men, as to what they are in the sight of God, and to what they would be in their own sight, if they were spiritually enlightened. Our Saviour describes the Pharisees as appearing "*beautiful without*," while within, they were wholly unclean; and the total depravity of sinners now does not imply that they may not, in some instances, appear decent, or even "*beautiful, without*."

Mr. S. farther speaks of total depravity, as implying that sinners are "utterly *incapable*" of exercising holiness. They have "no capacity to do good"—are "incapable of goodness"—are "utterly unable to observe" divine precepts, &c.—Now this representation of the doctrine of

depravity, we wholly disavow. Sinners are in no sense "incapable of goodness." They are the subjects of no natural inability to be holy. For if they were, they would have lost their moral nature—have ceased to be moral agents—and would be equally incapable of sin. The fact that they are sinners, shows that they are capable of sinning; and if they are capable of sinning, they are capable of doing their duty.

Mr. S. urges but two arguments against total depravity; the one derived from *analogy*, and the other from *observation*.—Mankind, he says, "are not totally any thing." Saints are not "totally pure;" and consequently sinners are not totally depraved. "Some are wise; but not always, nor in all things. Some are timorous generally; yet, on an occasion, can be bold as lions." (pp. 5, 6.) But arguments of this nature are least of all to be trusted. Analogies such as these lay no sure foundation for the inference intended to be derived from them. They may serve to illustrate and enliven a subject; but are of little use, in establishing or disproving a disputed doctrine. They are of absolutely no weight, in opposition to the plain declarations of Scripture.

In opposing the doctrine of total depravity, Mr. S. appeals to the universal *observation* of men. "Where," says he, "is the being, on the face of the earth, who has done nothing but sin; whose every act has been wicked, and all his thoughts, emotions, and desires corrupt? You cannot find such a being; this may be the description of a devil, but not of a man." (p. 4.) The point at issue between Mr. S. and his opponents, is not of a character to be determined by an ap-

peal like this. It is not of a nature to be submitted to universal observation. If it respected chiefly the outward conduct of men, the one party affirming and the other denying, that their conduct was all externally vicious; it might perhaps be decided in this way. But this, we have shown, is not the case. We no more believe, than Unitarians do, that all the conduct of unrenewed men is externally vicious. Much, that numbers of this class do, is in appearance proper; and were their hearts as holy, as their lives are useful, they would be well entitled to the appellation of saints. The mistake of Mr. S., on this point, is a great one, and it has greatly misled him, in his views and reasonings on the subject of depravity.

There is another thing which has probably deceived him, as we think it does most Unitarians in estimating the amount of human transgression—they do not know *what sin is*. They will, of course, regard this as an arrogant conclusion; but it has not been formed without long and mature deliberation; and we think it not uncharitable, as it helps to account for their otherwise unaccountable blindness on the subject of sin—they do not know *what sin is*. The writer of the Tract, already reviewed, entitled "*The Faith once delivered to the Saints*," has the following sentiment relative to this subject: man, "on entering life, is neither virtuous nor vicious, neither holy nor sinful; but possesses such powers, as, when developed, will render him one or the other, according to the objects to which they become attached, and the habits which they form. These powers are *reason* and *conscience*, which approve and lead to goodness; and

the *passions* and *appetites*, which incline to self-indulgence and sin." His "*trial consists principally in the struggle for mastery between these two parts of his constitution*." (p. 4.) According to this view, every sin implies a *triumph* of the appetites and passions over the dictates of reason and conscience. But if this is an adequate view of sin, then no decent man can accuse himself of being very sinful. He may on some occasions have been led too far by his appetites and passions, and swerved a little from the line of duty; but his character, in the general, he is constrained to regard as pure and holy.—But how different is this view of sin, from that given in the Scriptures? "*Sin is a transgression of the law*." What then is the law? "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, and with all thy mind. And thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments, hang all the law and the prophets*," Mat. xxii. 37. Here then is the rule, by which we are to regulate all our moral exercises and feelings; and by which we are to *measure* and *try* ourselves, if we would estimate the amount of our holiness, or our sin. But measured by this rule, how many who now pride themselves on their supposed virtues, would be found fearfully wanting! Measured by this rule, strictly and faithfully applied, how many men of decent exterior, would find that they had never possessed one holy affection! How many would find, that they had always loved themselves better than God—that they had been more concerned for their own credit, interest, and happiness, than they had for his glory—and

consequently that their hearts were entirely sinful. They could not accuse themselves of suffering appetite and passion to triumph often over reason; but they could and must accuse themselves of being continually selfish, and on this account of being continually sinful. We repeat it, therefore, as a principal reason why Unitarians make so false an estimate of human transgression—they *do not know what sin is*. And being ignorant of this, they cannot be sensible of the fearful extent, to which themselves and others are contaminated with it.

Mr. S. admits, at least by implication, that the Scriptures afford some countenance to the doctrine of total depravity; but adds, "there are two very obvious principles of interpretation, which ought to be applied to the passages thus employed, which remove at once all pretence for using them in evidence of such a doctrine. 1. What is declared in universal terms is not always to be received without limitation. 2. All which was true of the moral condition of particular persons, communities, or generations, may not be true of us." (pp. 7, 9.) The question requiring to be decided, in regard to these rules of interpretation, does not respect so much their *propriety*, as their *application*; for if all sects and denominations may avail themselves of them, as often as their exigencies or their convenience render necessary, it is plain that no point, which is at all disputed, can ever again be determined by a reference to the Bible. For instance, the Scriptures assure us, that we "all are of the dust, and *all turn to dust again*." But it may be said, on the other hand, "What is declared in universal terms is not always

to be received without limitation; and all which was true of former generations may not be true of us;—there is no certainty that *we shall not live forever*." The Apostle directs, "*Let all things be done decently and in order*." But the advocates of disorder and confusion may say, "What is declared in universal terms is not always to be received without limitation; and all which was true of particular persons, or communities, in former times, may not be true of us;—the direction of the Apostle makes not at all against us."—These instances are adduced to show, that however just may be the principles of interpretation suggested by Mr. Sewall, we need some *rule*, by which to apply them. And, happily, the rule we so much need is a very obvious one. "What is declared in universal terms," is to be received in universal terms; and what is declared "of particular persons, communities, or generations," is to be regarded as applicable to all persons, communities, or generations, *unless when limited by the connexion, by other parts of Scripture, or by the nature of the subject*. The propriety of this rule we presume will not be disputed. The question then is, "What necessity for limiting the numerous and various universal terms, in which the Scriptures set forth the doctrine of depravity?" And truly we know of no necessity, except what results from the exigencies of the Unitarian hypothesis. The connexion of the passages involves none; and none arises from other parts of Scripture; and none arises from the nature of the subject—unless indeed it can be shown, that the doctrine of total depravity is a palpable absurdity. Hence, on the fairest principles

of interpretation, the universal terms, in which the Scriptures set forth this important doctrine, must stand; and it is believed they establish it, beyond reasonable dispute.

We have no time to go into a labored argument from the Scriptures in proof of total depravity; and yet we can hardly satisfy ourselves, without furnishing some specimens of the language of inspiration on the subject.

A certain class of men are customarily spoken of by the sacred writers, as the unjust, the unrighteous, the ungodly, the unholy, the unbelieving. But what less do these negative epithets imply, than a *destitution* of holy affections?

The same class are represented as being spiritually *blind*, and *deaf*, and *dead*. "Hear, ye *deaf*, and look, ye *blind*, that ye may see." "You hath he quickened, who *were dead* in trespasses and sins." These representations necessarily teach us, that as the blind are destitute of sight, the deaf of hearing, and the dead of life; so unrenewed men are *destitute of holiness*, which is spiritual life.

The *declarations* of Scripture, in support of the sentiment under consideration, are numerous and explicit. Before the flood, "God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt; for *all flesh had corrupted his way upon it*." Immediately after the flood, the declaration is repeated, "*The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth*." Again it is said of the human family, "They are all gone aside; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, *not one*. None understand; none seek after God; all are gone out of the way; all are become unprofita-

ble; there is none that doeth good, no, *not one*." "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born." "The whole world lieth in wickedness." "The heart of the sons of men is *full of evil*," and "*fully set in them to do evil*." "*Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually*." "The heart is deceitful above all things, and *desperately wicked*." "The carnal mind is *enmity against God*; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." "I know you, that *ye have not the love of God in you*." "Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." "Being abominable, disobedient, and to every good work reprobate."*

We have another argument, which we deem conclusive, derived from the *distinction*, every where recognised in the Scriptures, between the righteous and the wicked. The *fact* of this distinction none pretend to dispute; and the *ground* of it is as evident as the fact. While the Gospel requires the highest attainments in holiness, its gracious promises are extended to those who have made but the *lowest* attainments. "The bruised reed shall not be broken, nor the smoking flax be quenched." "Whosoever shall give unto one of these little ones a *cup of cold water only*, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." The moment the prodigal *began* to return, his father was prepared to meet him. When the thief on the cross put forth his *first* exercise of true repentance, he was

* Gen. vi. 12, and viii. 21. Rom. iii. 10—12. Ps. lviii. 5. 1 John v. 19. Ecc. ix. 3, and viii. 11. Gen. vi. 5. Jer. xvii. 9. Rom. viii. 7. John v. 42, and viii. 44. Tit. i. 16.

immediately forgiven, and became an heir of the grace of life. And so it has been in all periods since—so it is now. Persons belong to the class of sinners, till their hearts are melted, and they *begin* to exercise holy affections; from which moment they become the objects of divine complacence, and are numbered with the saints. But if it is the ground of distinction between saints and sinners, that the former class have *some* holy affections; then the latter class have *none*. They are absolutely *destitute of holiness*, and consequently *all their moral exercises are sinful*.

Mr. S. closes his remarks on total depravity by insisting on the evil consequences of “magnifying what is bad in human character,” and “of exaggerating one’s own sins,” (p. 12,) but as we are not conscious of doing either of these, we can take no part of his reproofs or warnings to ourselves. Indeed the evil of which he complains, so far at least as relates to the views which persons customarily take of their own sins, we do not believe requires correction. They

may be too unsparing in their censures of others—even *Unitarians* may; or they may talk extravagantly respecting themselves; but we do not believe that persons are in any danger of regarding sin as a greater evil than it is, or of regarding themselves as more vile and sinful than they appear in the sight of God. So far from this, all their danger, we apprehend, is on the other side. They are in danger of “thinking themselves something, when they are nothing;” and of fancying that they are spiritually “rich, and increased with goods,” when they are “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” Could Mr. S. but see himself, for one hour, in the glass of God’s holy law, and experience the sensations of the great Apostle, when the commandment came home with power to his conscience, and sin revived, and he died; his views of himself would be materially changed. They would be so changed, we have no doubt, that he would wish his “Discourse on Human Depravity” to be blotted forever from the page of existence.

No. III.

THE *fourth* Tract in the series under consideration is entitled “*Omniscience the attribute of the Father only*.” It is “a reprint of a Sermon, delivered some years since in England, by Rev. Joseph Hutton,” and is founded on Mark xiii. 32, “*But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father*.” We have examined the Sermon with considerable attention, and give the following as an analysis of its con-

tents: The twelve first pages may be regarded as an *introduction*, in which the author attempts to vindicate himself and his brethren from the charge of degrading the Saviour; insisting, that if they refuse him divine honors, it is not because they do not love him—that, if they are in error, still they are safe—that others, whom they “deem in gross error,” are as safe as they—that Unitarians are most sincere in their views of religious truth—and, of course, that they

ought not to be denied the countenance and fellowship of Orthodox believers. On page 13th, Mr. Hutton introduces his text; and, after asserting once and again, in the next three pages, that Christ was ignorant of the day and hour of which he spake, infers that he did not possess the attribute of omniscience, and consequently could not be a divine person. From the 16th page to the 23d, the author considers the Trinitarian interpretation of his text, that *Christ here speaks, not as God, but merely as man*—affirming that the supposition is absurd, and that it has not been acquiesced in by some Trinitarians, particularly by Mr. Wardlaw. Mr. H. next introduces several classes of passages, to prove the limited knowledge of the Saviour; specially those, in which he speaks of his doctrines as not his own—in which he is represented as *praying*, and as being *tempted*—and “which imply the limitation of any other of his attributes.” (pp. 23—34.) He then concludes, with renewedly protesting his sincerity, and fervent charity, though not his infallibility; and with exhorting his hearers to search the scriptures for themselves.

From the foregoing analysis it will be seen, that the main subject in dispute between Mr. Hutton and ourselves, may be reduced to a very narrow compass. It may be resolved into this one question, *Was the divine nature so united with human nature in the person of Christ, that he could consistently speak, and be spoken of, both as God, and as man?* If this question is determined in the negative, then we admit that Mr. Hutton’s text, and the other passages which he has cited, are full to his purpose, and go to disprove the divinity of the Saviour—dis-

proving, at the same time however, the divine authority of the *Scriptures*, as being wholly irreconcilable, one part with another. But if the question be determined in the affirmative, then clearly the passages, on which he relies, prove nothing to his purpose. If the divine and human natures were so united in the person of Christ, that he could consistently speak, and be spoken of, both as God, and as man; then he might, as man, represent himself to be ignorant of the hour of judgment, and yet, as God, possess “all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” He might, as man, and as the constituted mediator between God and men, receive his instructions from the Father—might offer supplications to the Father—he might “in all points be tempted, like as” other men—his human attributes might all be limited—in a word, all that Mr. H. has alleged might be true—and yet none of it afford the least evidence that Christ was not a divine person. We repeat it, therefore, as fairly involving the whole subject in dispute, *Was the divine nature so united with human nature in the person of Christ, that he could consistently speak, and be spoken of, both as God, and as man?*

This question, it will be seen, is one of mere *fact*, to be determined wholly by the testimony of Scripture. And it is not necessary that those, who answer it in the affirmative, should go into all the *hows* and the *wherefores*, which may be made to grow out of it—that they should be able to explain, or to understand, the *manner*, in which the divine and human natures are united, in the person of their Saviour. Whether creatures such as we, can comprehend this mysterious union or

not, and whether it seem reasonable to us or not, is of very little consequence. God knows, undoubtedly, what the truth is; and the simple point which it concerns us to know is, *What hath God revealed? What is the decision of the Scriptures?*

Let it be observed then, in the first place, that the Scriptures represent the Lord Jesus Christ as possessing a *divine* nature; or as being, in some sense, *God*. We cannot here go into a citation of passages in support of this proposition; nor do we think it necessary, as full proof of it has been exhibited in a former part of this Review.* Suffice it to say, that the same scriptural arguments, which show the divine nature of the Father, may be urged to show the divine nature of the Son. The Father is denominated Lord, and God, and mighty God, and Jehovah; and so is the Son. The Father is represented as eternal, immutable, omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent; and so is the Son. The Father is spoken of as the creator, preserver, governor, and final judge of the world; and so is the Son. The Father is exhibited as a proper object of worship, to saints on earth, and angels in heaven; and so is the Son. The Father too asserts his own divinity; and so does the Son. "*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*"†

The Scriptures farther represent the Lord Jesus Christ as possessing *human* nature; or as being in some sense, a *man*. We have as much evidence that he was a man, as that any other person mentioned in the Bible was a man. He was born as a man; he grew as a man; he appeared,

lived, suffered, and died, as a man. In numerous instances, he is expressly denominated a man—"the man Christ Jesus."

Yet this mysterious and glorious personage, whose very name is "*Wonderful*"—constitutes but one person. He is not numerically two, but one—"one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

If now we put together these three particulars, each of which is supported by divine testimony; we shall have from them the following proposition: *The Lord Jesus Christ possesses both a divine and human nature, united in one person.* In other words, he is "*God*, manifest in the *flesh*." He is "*the Word*, made *flesh*." Being in one sense a *man*, he really is—what he was once understood as making himself to be—in another sense, *God*. But if this is the fact, then he may, with perfect truth and propriety, speak, and be spoken of, both as *God*, and as *man*. He may be represented as born of a woman—and yet as the Creator and Preserver of worlds; as "*crucified through weakness*"—and as possessing "*all power, in heaven and on earth*;" as not knowing the day or the hour of judgment—and as knowing literally *all things*. We repeat here, what we had occasion to say on a previous page,‡ we fully believe all those passages, which represent the Lord Jesus as, in some sense, inferior to the Father. We believe them in their most obvious sense.—They express a sentiment which is dear, and even *essential*, to our faith, as Christians. And we as fully believe another class of passages, which invest this same Jesus with the glories of the Godhead—which represent him as equal to,

* pp. 9, 10.

† Rev. i. 8, 11 and xxii. 13.

‡ p. 15.

and one with, the Father Almighty.

As the discourse before us denies the *omniscience* of Christ, it may be proper to adduce the testimony of Scripture to this particular point. It is said of him by one of the Evangelists, that "he *knew all men*, and needed not that any should testify of man, for he *knew what was in man*." "*He knew, from the beginning, who they were that believed not*." Say the disciples to him, on a certain occasion, "Now we are *sure*, that thou *knowest all things*." "Lord," says Peter, "*thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee*." He knew the thoughts and designs of those with whom he conversed; and he says of himself, "*I am he which searcheth the reins and the heart*."* And we may farther ask, What *less* than omniscience can qualify the Saviour to be the final judge of angels and men? These, and other similar representations of Scripture—which are not so much as noticed in the Sermon before us—are recommended to the future consideration of those, who deny divine attributes and honors to Christ, and assert, from partial views of the subject, that "omniscience is the attribute of the Father only."

The Tract here examined is to us rather a spiritless production, having less pith and substance than some in the series, and not calculated to produce much effect any way. It is written in a diffuse and complimentary strain, and is distinguished chiefly for its insipidity, and for a fulsome and affected display of charity. The author assures us, once and again, that himself and those who agree with him are sincere in their views

and pure and holy in their intentions. And "those who differ most widely from him," he believes are as sincere, as good, and as safe, as they. "They may be in error; but what then? They are in charity; and we do not question their final acceptance with the Father." (p. 6.)

The writer of the *next Tract*, "On the Religious Phraseology of the New Testament, and of the present day," begins with complaining of the vagueness and obscurity of our ideas on the subject of religion—attributing the evil, partly to the spiritual nature of religion, partly to indifference, but especially to the words and phrases in which our ideas on this subject are conveyed. He remarks, first, "on the religious phraseology of the New Testament," and secondly, on that "of the present day." Under the first of these divisions, he considers "the appellations given to Christianity, such as *covenant, testament, kingdom of God, and mystery*; the word by which is expressed "the good or benefit, which Christianity was principally designed to communicate," viz. *salvation*; the prescribed "way of obtaining this good or benefit"—by "exertion on our part," while we depend on the proffered aid of heaven; and "the method in which God bestows his favor, commonly designated by the terms *forgiveness, and justification*."—Under the second division, he "notices three kinds of phrases—those which describe the *process of becoming religious*; those which describe the *thing itself*; and those which consist of the *titles* that are appropriated to persons considered religious." Each of these two divisions is followed by general remarks.

The ostensible object of this

* John ii. 24, and vi. 64, and xvi. 30, and xxi. 17. Mat. ix. 4. Rev. ii. 23.

publication is an important one. It is to explain the language of the New Testament, and to free religion from the burthen of a technical phraseology, which is regarded by the author as worse than useless. And there are passages in the book itself, to which, could they be separated from the remainder, we should offer no objection. For instance, in the explanation given of the words covenant and testament—of the consistency of divine and human agency in the formation of religious character—and of forgiveness and justification, as meaning the same—the views of the writer are not materially different from our own. There are other parts, however, which we consider exceptionable, and to these our attention will be chiefly directed.

In several instances, the author, instead of explaining the phraseology of Scripture, *obscures and confounds* it. “*Salvation*,” he says, “is the great benefit offered in the gospel.” But what are we to understand by salvation? It “is *purity of heart*—it is *virtue and piety*. The salvation offered in the Scriptures is in itself and essentially that *holiness*, which they inculcate.” (p. 10.) Salvation then, according to the new theological nomenclature, is the same as holiness. But suppose the terms be used interchangeably, the one for the other. “Behold now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of *holiness*. How shall we escape, if we neglect so great *holiness*? Perfecting *salvation* in the fear of God.”

If, to avoid the confusion introduced by this strange definition of the word salvation, it be said that, besides holiness, it includes also the happiness resulting from it; we reply that this is not its meaning. Salvation implies previous

loss, and is itself *deliverance* from that loss. In a religious sense, it signifies deliverance from sin, and from misery; but not, unless by consequence, the possession of either holiness or happiness.—Angels are both holy and happy; but they are not the subjects of salvation. They have not been saved, for they were never lost.

Speaking upon *faith*, our author inquires, “Is it better than love, or forgiveness? Is it better than obedience? Rather is it not essentially the *same thing*? No attentive reader of the New Testament can doubt that it is.” (p. 19.) Faith, then, according to this critic upon Scripture phraseology, is the same as love, forgiveness, and obedience. Consequently, love, forgiveness, and obedience must be the same as faith. And by a further consequence, since things which are equal to the same are equal to one another, love, forgiveness, and obedience, must be of the same import. If the writer means, that these exercises are the same, because they are all branches of religious duty; then we reply, that he has expressed his meaning very loosely: For on this principle, he might say, that holy joy, and holy sorrow, that keeping the Sabbath and speaking the truth, are all the same. But if he means that they are literally the same, so that the terms expressing them may be used, the one for the other; then he confounds the plainest distinctions, and sets up a principle which cannot be carried through a single chapter of the New Testament, without rendering it perfectly unintelligible.

Forgiveness, we are informed by this writer, is “a disposition in God. It is a disposition to deal mercifully with us.” (p. 20.) But

according to this definition of forgiveness, who among the sinful creatures of God are not already forgiven? Who are they, towards whom he has no disposition, could it be consistent, to deal mercifully? And besides, what do we mean when we *pray* for forgiveness? Do we pray that God would cherish towards us a merciful disposition? Do we believe he ever cherished, towards any of his creatures, an unmerciful disposition? And still farther, it may be asked; why should the scriptural signification of the term forgiveness, be so totally different from that in common use? The Judge on the bench, while pronouncing the sentence of the law, may cherish towards the criminal a merciful disposition; but this is not forgiving him. And the chief magistrate, in whom is vested the right to pardon, may cherish towards the convict a merciful disposition, even to the moment of his execution; but neither is this forgiving him. It certainly became one, who was complaining of the obscurity of scriptural language, and was writing with a view to open and explain it, not to "darken counsel by words without knowledge," and thus to obscure and confound it the more.

Our author finds fault, in some instances, with "the religious phraseology of the New Testament," not, as we think, because it does not express the sentiment intended, but because this sentiment does not comport with his own views. He complains that the phrases "born again, created anew," &c. have been arrayed in opposition to "the slow process of spiritual renovation," and have given rise to the notion of "an instantaneous change" of heart. (p. 12.) We are aware, indeed,

that these phrases have been thus used; and thus, we are satisfied, they ought to be used. For the very reason that our author wishes them to be set aside, we cannot consent to set them aside. The sentiment they express is as welcome to us, as it can be unwelcome to him. "The slow process of spiritual renovation!" How long does it take a person to turn from the exercise of sin, to the exercise of holiness? "The slow process of spiritual renovation"—prolonged for weeks, and months, and perhaps for years! But what is the state of a person, while this "slow process" is going on—neither one thing, nor the other—neither a sinner, nor a saint! And if taken out of time, while in this state, to what world shall he be consigned?

The religious phraseology of the *present day*, we consider of far less consequence than that of the Scriptures. We shall not stickle for the propriety of every word, or combination of words, by which persons have set forth "the process of becoming religious"—or described religion itself—or designated those whom they have regarded as religious. It would not be strange, if illiterate but well meaning persons have spoken improperly on this subject, as they do on most others. Still the objections of our author to many of the expressions on which he remarks, lie not so much, we are persuaded, against the phraseology, as against the sentiment. The words used give the meaning intended; but this meaning is not consistent with his particular views of truth. We cannot discover the impropriety of representing awakened and convicted sinners as "being anxious—being under concern—be-

ing struck under conviction"—or as "seeing the plague of their own hearts;" and when truly converted, as "being brought out of a state" of darkness; or as "meeting with a change of heart." They do indeed shadow forth a painful process, to be passed through" ordinarily by the hardened sinner, "in order to become religious;" and represent the change as instantaneous. But for this very reason, they are the terms of our choice; they express what we mean; and before we can be persuaded to relinquish them as improper, we must be satisfied of the impropriety of the sentiment they are intended to convey.

Nor can we see the impropriety of representing the newly converted as having an "interest in Christ," as "receiving comfort," and as "rejoicing" in hope; or of representing religion by the terms "grace" or "godliness;" or of representing Christians as feeling "a compassion for sinners, a love of the brethren," or a "love of souls." The most of these expressions are decidedly scriptural, and the objections of our author to them are decidedly unscriptural. For instance, feelings of rejoicing, he says, are "least of all proper to the commencement of a religious course." (p. 28.) But when the eunuch believed, and had been baptized, did he not go "on his way rejoicing?" And when the jailer and his family had been baptized, did he not "rejoice, believing in God with all his house?" On the same page in which feelings of rejoicing are objected to, as "least of all proper to the commencement of a religious course," the "serious and solemn affections" are objected to, as "not presenting a very attractive description

of true religion." But if our religious affections must be neither "serious and solemn," nor yet joyful; what must they be? What sort of feelings would our Unitarian friends have us to cherish, on the great subject of religion?

Our author complains, that Christians "are called converts, church members, professors, professing christians, the pious," &c. But really we have not sufficient light or acuteness to discover the impropriety of these appellations. If Christians have been truly converted, why may they not be denominated "converts?" If they have, like Timothy, "professed a good profession before many witnesses," and become members of the visible church of Christ, why may they not be called "professors, professing Christians," or "church members?" Or if they truly love, worship, and serve God, are they not "*pious*," and may not this epithet be justly applied to them? Why not call Christians, as well as others, by their right names, and speak of them according to their circumstances and characters?

Our author objects, generally, to the words and phrases on which we have remarked, that they "give a character of *indistinctness* to religion;" "*shelter heartlessness and hypocrisy*;" and, especially, that they "make religion a *peculiar thing*, and prevent its diffusion through the mass of society." (pp. 30—32.) But we do not ourselves believe that these objections are valid. Doubtless some may use the words under consideration, as they use other words, without attaching to them any very definite meaning. But the fault, in this case, lies not in the words,

but in the *habits* of the individuals concerned. They would use any other form of words that could be substituted, in the same way. And as to the charge of "heartlessness and hypocrisy," it is yet to be proved, that those to whom the words *grace*, and *godliness*, and *piety*, and a *change of heart*, and *love for souls*, have become familiar, are less sincerely engaged in religion, than Unitarians. "By their *fruits* ye shall know them." Who then are *doing most*, for the religious instruction of the rising generation; for the establishment of religious institutions among the destitute of our own country; and for the spread of the gospel throughout the world? But the phraseology in question "tends to make religion a *peculiar thing*, and to prevent its diffusion through the mass of society." And what if it does? Is this an objection to it, or the contrary? We know the influence of names, and doubt not but it would be possible, by the adoption of a religious phraseology less distinctive and expressive than that left us in the Bible, to bring religion down so near to nothing, that those who care little or nothing for the subject, might be induced to embrace it. But a diffusion of religion such as this might better be called an *evaporation* of it—as the effect of it must soon be, to banish religion from the earth. Better, far better let the phraseology of the New Testament, and of Christians too, so far as theirs accords with the Bible, remain as it is; and if the pride of men cannot adopt it, they must reject it. If the world cannot be elevated to the standard of religion, let not religion be brought down to the level of a wicked world. Let "the form

of sound words," which we have heard from Christ and his holy Apostles, be strenuously retained; and if others cannot walk with us on conditions like these, they must be left to walk by themselves.

We close our remarks on this Tract, with presenting to our readers the following passage, which—though we think the sense might have been better expressed in a more scriptural phraseology—we in the main approve.

"How strong are the indirect intimations, which the scriptures give of the fallen and unhappy state of human nature. Every thing which we are taught concerning our duty, our interest, our spiritual welfare, points to our deficiency and danger. Thus the attainment of the true dignity, excellence, and happiness of our being, is called a salvation. It is a rescue,—it is an escape. It is not an early vigor, and a splendid improvement, but it is poverty, and weakness, and redemption that we hear of. It comes not to us with the beauty and joy of innocence, but under the humbler aspect and name of relief. The richest boon of our existence, you thus see, bears an inscription that testifies to our unworthiness. Observe, too, the characteristics and descriptions of this blessing. The commencement of all that is good within us, must needs be called a renovation; its progress is a conflict; its end is a release. The ritual expressions of it too, are baptismal waters, to wash away our sins, and the symbols of suffering and death, that was endured for us.

"There is then an implication pervading the whole scriptures of the most humbling nature. I had rather, says Dr. Paley, in speaking of that branch of the Christian evidence, which he has so acutely traced out in his *Hora Paulinæ*—I had rather at any time, surprise a coincidence in an oblique allusion, than read it in broad assertions. His meaning is, that it conveys more proof. And it is so with the subject before us. Stronger than all the direct accusations of guilt in the sacred writings, and more humbling and touching to our feelings, is the indirect and universal recognition in them of our unworthiness—the taking this for granted in the whole system of religion, which they mark out, and as it were, the involuntary aspect of distrust and appre-

hension, with which they regard our condition and prospect." pp. 22, 23.

The next Tract in the series is "a Letter on the Principles of the Missionary Enterprize," by Rev. Dr. Tuckerman, late of Chelsea. It is an earnest and animated discussion of the leading principles of Missionary effort; and, though not free from inconsistencies growing out of the religious sentiments of the author, is yet written with general ability, and with a good spirit. The principles to be illustrated, he describes as follows: 1. "A Christian sense of the moral and religious condition of those, who are living under the influences of heathenism, and of false religion." 2. "A deep and strong sense of the reality, and power, and worth of our religion; and of the inestimable blessings which it will not fail to impart to those, who shall cordially receive, and faithfully obey it." And 3. "God designs that man shall be his instrument, for imparting the blessings of Christianity to man."

Under the first of these particulars, which is that to which our remarks will be chiefly directed, Dr. T. urges the spiritual necessities of the heathen, not only from the direct representations of Scripture, and the testimony of Missionaries, but especially from the *untiring efforts* of our Lord and his Apostles, to improve their condition by imparting to them the Gospel. "Must not their condition," he asks, "have been *most deplorable*, to have excited this sympathy, this interest stronger than death, in their recovery?"

The single error of Dr. T., which we think it needful in this place to notice, is his repeated intimation, that the heathen, not-

withstanding their idolatry and consequent debasement, still are, or may be, in a *safe state*. "Our Lord uttered no denunciations against the mere offerers of a false worship; nor did his Apostles, great as was their zeal for the conversion of men, pronounce anathemas against them, merely as idolators." "The true view of heathenism is, not that it is a condition, in which, if a man die, he is therefore necessarily under eternal condemnation. Terrible thought; and most dishonorable alike to God and to Christianity!" "Paul saw not, nor did any of the Apostles see, in the heathen world, men who were doomed to endless perdition, only because they were Pagans."—"The *heathens are safe*, as far as that idolatry is concerned, the evil of which they know not." (pp. 14, 18, 36.) These, and other similar declarations, which occur in the first part of the Tract before us, are certainly fitted to leave the impression, that the heathen, though on several accounts they may be objects of pity, are yet, if sincere in their idolatrous practices, in a safe condition for eternity. Now this is a sentiment to which we cannot subscribe, and to which we much regret that any currency should have been given, by one who appears to feel so deeply for the heathen, as the writer of this Tract.

We object to this sentiment, because we think it *unscriptural*. Paul represents the end of heathenish worship and practices to be *eternal death*; and those who had been addicted to these practices as having lived without "hope, and without God in the world." (Rom. vi. 21. Eph. ii. 12.) He enumerates "*idolators*," among those, who shall "not in-

herit the kingdom of God." (1 Cor. vi. 9.) He farther assures us, that "as many as have sinned without law, shall *perish without law*;" and that a leading motive of all his exertions in behalf of the heathen was, that he might, if possible, "*save some*." (Rom. ii. 12. 1 Cor. ix. 22.)

We object farther to the sentiment in question, that it is inconsistent with the testimony of those who have had the best means of becoming acquainted with the moral state of the heathen. Gladly would we believe that the heathen might be saved, were there evidence that any considerable number of them appeared penitent and humble, and possessed a moral fitness for heaven. But it is painful to observe that all the accounts from them contain not only no evidence of this, but evidence the most indubitable to the contrary. After a twenty years' residence in India, Dr. Ward observes, "*I have never seen one man (in his heathen state) who appeared to fear God and work righteousness*." On the contrary, the language of the Apostle seems most strikingly applicable to them all: *There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God.*" Another Missionary observes, "*As my acquaintance with the natives enlarges, I am increasingly convinced that there is scarcely one, who has the least pretension to any religious concern.*"

The sentiment before us, to which some of the expressions of Dr. T. are fitted to give countenance, seems inconsistent with his representations in other parts of his Letter. "What," he asks, "is there that is low, what that is vicious, or what that is wretched, which was not comprehend-

ed in ancient, and which is not comprehended in modern, heathenism? There is nothing to be conceived, either of lewdness or of cruelty, which had not the sanctions of the religion of Greece and Rome, and which is not now a part of the idolatrous worship of the world. The vices were not incidental to this worship, but found, in some of its exercises, their very *spirit and life*. Our religion brings idolatry and false religion before us, as the history of all time represents them, as the *prolific mothers of all the vices and crimes, that can debase our nature, and disqualify for heaven.*" (pp. 21, 14.) In connexion with representations such as these, to the truth of which we most heartily subscribe, to what purpose is it for Dr. T. to tell us, that the Apostles did not regard the heathen as in danger of perishing, "only because they were Pagans;" or that "the heathen are safe," so far as the mere fact of their idolatry is concerned?

We object finally to the sentiment under consideration, that it is fitted more perhaps than any other which could be advanced, to damp the ardor of Missionary zeal. It is the heart-stirring thought, that the heathen in general are living and dying in unpardoned sin, and "perishing for lack of vision," which, beyond every other, excites the sympathies, the prayers, and efforts of the friends of Missions. And we hazard nothing in predicting, that Dr. T. will labor in vain to arouse his Unitarian brethren to any great degree of feeling or exertion in the cause of Missions, until he convinces them of this solemn scriptural truth, and presses it home upon their hearts. Considering the

disadvantages of his religious system, we think he has done well, not only in the letter before us, but in his previous "Appeal to Liberal Christians, for the cause of Christianity in India." He has written with much earnestness, and with ability. But what great results have followed, or are likely to follow, as the fruit of his labours? While, therefore, we thank him for his past efforts in a glorious cause, we cannot but ask him to look at the subject again. We hope he may

re-examine it with a view to ascertain, whether the system of faith, to which he adheres, possesses sufficient inherent warmth, and furnishes sufficiently powerful motives, to lead to great and vigorous missionary exertions; and whether, in order to inspire men with the ardor of a Brainerd or a Martyn, he must not approximate much nearer than he is at present, to those views of religious truth, which they received, and which they taught.

No. IV.

THE next writer with whom we have to do is Rev. Orville Dewey of New Bedford, in a Tract entitled "The Unitarian's Answer." Originally, we presume, this Tract was a Sermon, from 1 Pet. iii. 15. "*Be ready always to give an answer,*" &c. It was "first published by the New Bedford Book and Tract Association," and has now passed to its "third edition." The object of it is to exhibit the *reasons*, why Unitarians prefer their own system of religion to all others. "These reasons," says the author, are the two following, viz. "the system which we have embraced is, in our judgment, more *true*, and more *useful*, than the systems which prevail around us."

Before entering on an examination of these general reasons, it is natural to inquire, and indeed necessary to determine, what the Unitarian system is: for unless we know what the system is, how can we estimate the force of reasons to induce us to embrace it? But to this most reasonable inquiry, we are furnished with no explicit answer; and we are un-

der the necessity of proceeding to the body of the work, and of spelling out what Unitarianism is, from among the reasons advanced to support it. In doing this, we are impressed more than ever with the propriety of a description once given of Unitarianism, that it "*consists rather in not believing*;"* since, having diligently examined the pages before us, with a view to discover what it is, we can now tell of little more than what it is not—than what it rejects and discards from the religious system of our venerated Fathers. It rejects, first of all, the doctrine of the Trinity, inculcating, not only (in common with other systems) the unity of God, but that there are no personal distinctions in the Godhead. It rejects the divinity of the Saviour, receiving him merely in his *official* character, without pretending to know how long he has lived, or what may be his particular rank in the scale of created beings. "From the stones, God could raise up children to Abra-

* This description was given by a Unitarian of Boston.

ham; and from the dust, he could raise up a Saviour. Suppose that his existence *did commence with his birth*; he might be none the less invested with all needful power." (p. 18.) Unitarianism farther rejects the proper atonement of Christ; regarding his death "as an example of virtue," or, if we please, "a sacrifice in the cause of virtue." It rejects also the scriptural view of human depravity; "believing that this depravity is great and lamentable, but not that it is native or total." It rejects the kindred doctrine of a radical and instantaneous moral change; preferring to consider conversion a progressive work, varying in its nature and character according to the varying circumstances of those who are its subjects.*

Such then is Unitarianism; and now for the reasons why the abettors of this system receive it, in preference to all others. "Our first and great reason," says Mr. D., "is, that in our apprehension it is *truer* than any other system." But what are we to understand by this singular mode of expression? "*Truer* than any other system!" Some other system then may be true; but Unitarianism is truer; and a third, yet undiscovered perhaps, may be the truest; and still not even this may be *the truth*! But not to appear captious;—how does Mr. D. evince that his is the truer system?—He begins with the Unitarian view of the Divine Being, and

* "With regard to *divine influence*," says Mr. D., "we firmly believe in it; only we maintain that it is strictly accommodated to the human powers, to human agency and freedom. And *election* we do not object against, if men are elected to be Christians, just as they are elected to be merchants or philosophers—in perfect conformity with their own choice, endeavour, and moral action. And *perseverance* we do not oppose, but plead for, if the doctrine be, that he only is a good man who is perseveringly good." pp. 35, 36.

asserts that this is, first, "the *simple* doctrine of the Bible;" second, "the *unembarrassed* doctrine of the Bible;" and third, "the *current* doctrine of the Bible." But what does he mean by its being "the *simple* doctrine of the Bible?" That the idea of one God existing in one person is more simple than that commonly received by Trinitarians? And what if it is? Is it on this account the more true? Do the Scriptures exhibit the Divine Being as a specially simple object of thought, presenting nothing mysterious, nothing difficult, to the contemplative mind? Certainly not, but the contrary. "*Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?*"—If the proper meaning of Mr. Dewey's first proposition has here been given, it obviously proves nothing to his purpose; and we can conceive of no other meaning, without running it into the second, viz. that his is "the *unembarrassed* doctrine of the Bible."—But is it possible that he finds no *embarrassment*, in squaring his views of the Supreme Being, with those presented in the holy Scriptures? Has he no embarrassment from those passages which speak of a *plurality* of persons in the Godhead? "Let us make man after our own image." "Let us go down, and confound their language." Has he none from the mass of evidence, so often exhibited, in proof of the supreme divinity of the Son, and Spirit? When the Son is called, not only God and Lord, but "the mighty God," the "true God," the "God over all," the "Jehovah of Israel"—when all the attributes of the Deity are appropriated to

him, and all the works of the Deity are ascribed to him, and all the honors of the Deity are offered to him—still, does Mr. D. find no embarrassment in saying and showing, that there is but one person in the Godhead, and that this person is the Father? Does he find no embarrassment from those many passages, in which the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are spoken of together, as distinctively concerned in the work of our redemption? “Baptizing them in name of the *Father*, and of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*.” “Elect, according to the foreknowledge of *God the Father*, through sanctification of the *Spirit*, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of *Christ*.” “The grace of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, and the love of *God*, and the communion of the *Holy Ghost*, be with you all.” “Through *him* (*Christ*) we both have access, by one *Spirit*, unto the *Father*.”* Remarking upon one of the passages commonly urged in proof of the divinity of Christ,† Mr. D. observes, “To some other translation we are urged, or else to the entire suspension of our judgment, by the monstrous incongruities and contradictions of the popular explanation.” (p. 11.) That is, ‘Another translation must be forced upon this passage, or we cannot tell what it means—we cannot explain it, consistently with Unitarian sentiments.’ And yet Mr. D. would persuade us that he finds no embarrassment, in rejecting the divinity of the Son of God!

But he proceeds to urge, that his is “the current doctrine of Scripture;” and in proof of this,

* Matt. xxviii. 19. 1 Peter, i. 2. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. Eph. ii. 18.

† Rom. ix. 5. “*Christ, who is over all, God blessed forever.*”

he tells us in how many hundred passages the supreme divinity of the Father is set forth; and in how many hundred more the Son is represented as “subordinate to the Father.” (p. 14.) But does he really believe that Trinitarians deny the supreme divinity of the Father; or that they do not regard the Son as in some sense subordinate, and even inferior to the Father? If his hundreds of passages, on these subjects, were increased to thousands, they would prove nothing to his purpose—nothing which we do not believe, as firmly as himself. It is perfectly vain for Unitarians to think of pressing us with proof-texts such as these; since they bear not at all on the question between us, but go merely to establish some of the essential parts of our own religious system.

In contradiction to the assertions of Mr. D., we feel it incumbent on us to say, that the Trinitarian doctrine is the only one which meets all the representations of the inspired volume, particularly in regard to the *person of Christ*. It meets those in which he is represented as God, and in which he is represented as man, and in which he is represented as the Mediator between God and man. It meets those in which he is represented as equal with the Father, and in which he is represented as inferior to him. It meets those in which he is represented as one with the Father, and in which he is represented as distinct from him.

The various representations of Scripture respecting the person of Christ, it is thought may be compared to a lock, the wards of which are so constructed, that but one key can possibly be made to fit them. Apply the sentiment that Christ is God, and nothing

else, and the key will not suit. It will turn indeed a little way, but cannot be forced round. It meets those passages which speak of the Saviour's divinity, but is irreconcilable with others which speak of his humanity.—Apply next the doctrine of Christ's mere humanity, and this does not suit. This will turn very well a little way, but no strength or artifice can bring it round. This meets those passages which speak of the Saviour's humanity, but is inconsistent with others which speak of his divinity.—Apply next the various keys of the other, and (as they are sometimes thought) higher classes of Unitarians, and none of these will suit. They may indeed be driven thro' some particular parts of the lock, but they turn easily no where, and it is impossible, without breaking, to force them through the whole. The only key which is known, or can be conceived of, which will perfectly suit in every part, is the sentiment advanced by Trinitarians, that *Christ unites, in his person, both divinity and humanity.* With this idea, all the passages which speak of him are consistent. In this, they all perfectly harmonize; and thus evince that this is indeed the revelation which God hath given us of his Son.

Mr. D. objects to the Trinitarian system, that, on this ground, Christ must have *humbled himself* to undertake the mediatorial work; whereas the Scriptures speak of him, in his appointment to this work, as being greatly *honored and exalted.* "Him hath God *exalted* to be a Prince and a Saviour." "God hath highly *exalted* him, and given him a name that is above every name."—But Mr. D. ought to know there is another class of passages, which assert that Christ actually *did*

humble himself, when he assumed the office of Mediator. "Though he was rich, yet, for your sakes, he *became poor.*" "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but *made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men*; and, being found in fashion as a man, he *humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*"—It is the happiness of our system, that it meets and harmonizes both these classes of passages; while it is the misfortune of the Unitarian system, that it meets, at best, but one of them. As *man*, Christ was "highly exalted," in being made "a Prince and a Saviour;" but as *God*, he greatly humbled himself, when he "took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men," and entered upon his mediatorial work. It is characteristic of the Trinitarian system, and of this only, that it is in agreement with all the representations which are given of Christ, in the inspired volume.

From the doctrine of the Trinity, Mr. D. passes to that of the *atonement*. He resolves the death of Christ into a mere *mean of grace*, intended to promote our deliverance from sinful practices, and to furnish motives in favor of holiness. Christ died, he says, first, "as an example of virtue;" second, "that he might rise again, and thus confirm the truth of his mission;" and third, as "a sacrifice in the cause of human virtue," and to furnish "a strong and affecting pledge of God's mercy" to men. (pp. 27—30.) That some of the objects here mentioned were accomplished by the death of Christ, no one doubts; but the question is, does

either of them, or do they all, constitute the *great* purpose and object for which he died? He exhibited an *example* of patient and submissive suffering, we admit; but can it be conceived that he endured the agonies of the cross, for this purpose merely? Did any one else ever die for such an object? Thousands have met their last enemy with exemplary patience, submission, and fortitude; but who ever died for the mere purpose of setting such an example? The *resurrection* of Christ was consequent upon his death; but so also it was upon his life and birth. And it may be said as truly, that he could not have risen, had he not been born and lived, as that he could not have risen had he not died. But Christ died, we are told, "as a *sacrifice* in the cause of human virtue." This form of expression has been adopted, we presume, for the purpose of lugging in the word *sacrifice*, which is so often used, in the Scriptures, in reference to the death of Christ. But the word, as here used, has nothing of its appropriate scriptural signification. Christ died a "sacrifice in the cause of human virtue,"—just as Warren died a sacrifice in the cause of American freedom; or as Martyn died a sacrifice in the cause of Missions.—Christ's death, we are farther told, "is a strong and affecting pledge of God's mercy to men." But could God in no way satisfy men that he was merciful, but by such a tremendous token as the blood of his Son? Would they not believe his *word* on this point—a point to which, of all others, they might be supposed to be, and in fact have been, most inclined to give credence? Would they persist in regarding him as unfeeling, unmerciful, unless he brought his

Son to the cross, to satisfy them of the contrary?

Mr. D., in common with other Unitarians, regards an atonement through the blood of Christ as wholly unnecessary; since "forgiveness is the direct and unavoidable consequence of repentance and holiness." (p. 25.) But if forgiveness, or justification (which means the same) is "the direct and unavoidable consequence of repentance and holiness," then, in what sense are men not justified by their own performances? And what is the ground of the distinction, so much insisted on by the Apostle Paul, between being justified by faith, and by works? And farther; if "forgiveness is the direct and unavoidable consequence of repentance and holiness," then why, in the matter of forgiveness, is so much stress laid upon the *blood*, and the *death* of Christ? "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many *for the remission of sins*." "We have redemption through his blood, *the forgiveness of sins*." "Unto him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."*

Regarding the atonement as unnecessary, Mr. D. denies, as we might expect, that any atonement has ever been made. He denies that the sufferings of Christ are represented any where in the Scriptures, as "rendering it consistent with the divine character or government to forgive sinners." (p. 25.) But what will he make of the following representation of the Apostle Paul? "Whom (Christ) God hath set forth to be a *propitiation*," or *propitiatory sacrifice*, "through faith in his blood." For what purpose? "*To declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins*

* Mat. xxvi. 28. Eph. i. 7. Rev. v. 9.

that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness." But why must his righteousness be declared? "*That he might be just, and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.*" And what will he make of the declaration, that "*without the shedding of blood, there is no remission?*" There was none under the former shadowy dispensation; and there is none under the present, in which the substance has come, and the shadows are no more. And do not all those passages, which represent us as forgiven through Christ, and for his sake, necessarily imply that we could consistently be forgiven in no other way? Would Christ have died to open a way of forgiveness, when there was no necessity for such a sacrifice?

The next subject, on which Mr. D. regards his system as "truer" than that of the Orthodox, is *human depravity*. He seems to be aware that the Bible, literally interpreted, inculcates the total sinfulness of unsanctified men. But he adds, "The expressions which are quoted" in proof of this point, "are evidently the language, not of philosophical discrimination, but of strong feeling." (p. 33.) Consequently, as we are left to infer, they are not worthy to be believed.

The argument on which he chiefly relies, in opposing the doctrine of total depravity, is that "from reason, from experience, and observation." And to what does this amount? Why, in the first place, that "the native principles in man, such as the desire of physical enjoyment, of happiness, of power, of esteem, of knowledge—that the principle of self-defence—with the faculties of reason, conscience, mem-

ory," &c. are not sinful. (p. 32.) And nobody ever supposed they were. These native principles and faculties are possessed by the worst men, as well as by the best—they belong to our constitutions, and not to our characters—and no believer in total depravity, who understood the subject, ever regarded them as, of necessity, either sinful or holy.—But Mr. D. insists farther, that "good and holy affections are natural to men." And how does this appear? In general, from the fact, that we have something within us, which approves of what is right, and is affected with what is particularly generous, in the conduct of men. But is the approbation here spoken of, that of the conscience, or the heart; and are the affections referred to a part of the moral character, or the mere workings of animal feeling? In determining this point, it is not safe to appeal, as Mr. D. does, to the *consciousness* of individuals, but rather to the *fruit* which is exhibited in their conversation and lives. And having this for a criterion, we assert, without fear of contradiction, that the marks of holy affection suggested by Mr. D. appear not unfrequently in palpably vicious men—in men, who make no effectual efforts to *be* what they approve, or to imitate those acts of humanity and generosity, with which they are so much affected;—thus evincing that these are no marks of true holiness, and are not at all inconsistent with the divine declaration, that "the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil."

With the views which Mr. D. has expressed on the subject of depravity, his ideas of *conversion* cannot but be, in our apprehension, unscriptural. He talks in-

deed about conversion, but it amounts to but little more than talk. For if "good and holy affections are natural to men," *from what shall they be converted? And to what shall they be converted?* If their holy, natural affections are inconstant and imperfect, they may indeed be improved and perfected; but they cannot be, in the scriptural sense, *converted*—they cannot experience a radical and permanent moral change. Accordingly Mr. D. denies that *all* Christians ever do experience such a change; and that any are converted from total sinfulness to the first exercise of holiness. And yet how expressly is such a change inculcated and insisted on, in the holy Scriptures? "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."*

Mr. D. resolves his reasons for regarding Unitarianism as the more *useful* system of religion, into a series of "objections to the popular or Orthodox instructions of the day." These objections are ranged under three heads; first, "a want of discrimination;" second, "a want of enlarged and liberal views;" and third, "a want of real and close dealing with the conscience." (p. 37.)

The "want of discrimination," with which Orthodox ministers are considered chargeable, consists, it appears, in their adhering too strictly, to "the language of the Apostles," and in applying their language "too indiscriminately." "The terms *believing, being born again, being brought out of darkness into marvellous light*"—the regarding enlightened

congregations as composed of "two classes, *believers and unbelievers, penitent and impenitent, saints and sinners*"—and the Apostolic exhortation, "*Be not conformed to the world*"—although they might have been very well in the time of the Apostles—yet, in the opinion of Mr. D., ought now to be discarded. But on this subject, we trust he may set his heart at rest. The ground of his complaint against Orthodox ministers, is one on which they feel entitled to glory. They love the language of the Apostles, and will strenuously adhere to it; because, in the first place, it is the language of *inspiration*—the language suggested by the Holy Ghost; and because it expresses, with admirable precision, the *sense* which they intend to convey. We do verily believe that enlightened congregations, at the present day, like those in the age of the Apostles, are divided into two great moral classes, believers and unbelievers, saints and sinners—that when any sinner becomes a saint, he is, in the sense of Scripture, "born again," and "brought out of darkness into marvellous light"—and that those who are thus changed have need to be exhorted not to be "conformed to the world;" and believing this, why should we not speak of it in the language of Scripture? What better language can we think to devise, than that which was taught, not by the wisdom of man, but by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost?

In his complaint on the subject of conformity to the world, Mr. D. has some sentences which we feel constrained to quote, as a specimen of the spirit which occasionally oozes out, through

* John iii. 3. Mat. xviii. 3.

the leaky vessel of a boasted charity.

“One of the first notions which a new convert acquires, is, that men around him, perhaps his best friends, his kindred, are enemies or despisers of him on account of his religion, and he becomes, in consequence, sour, or sanctimonious, or conceited, and at any rate, less kind, less agreeable, less modest; while he imagines that he is all the more pious and heavenly. At the same time he is taught to avoid all cheerful recreations, as the ways of the sinful world; at least all polished recreations. He may go to the military review, he may celebrate ‘the Election,’ or the festival of Independence; he may mingle with promiscuous crowds, amidst vulgar sports, vicious excesses, and profane oaths, and not lose his good name; but let him beware of more decent and polished amusements, as he values his Christian standing. We do not deny that recreation may be abused, as business and every thing else may be abused. Still, however, the one was designed to occupy a place in life, as much as the other. Our concern is not to extirpate but to improve the pleasures of society. And to refuse recreations to the young, and relaxation to the busy, and amusement to the toiling, is not only an unwise and an unpromising undertaking, but it is to distort the rational and cheerful religion we profess, to disparage it in the eyes of intelligent and thinking men, and to dissuade them from its duties and ordinances. And it is at the same time to hold up to Christians, a very loose and questionable standard of piety.” pp. 40, 41.

A considerable part of this paragraph we declare to be utterly false and scandalous. New converts among the Orthodox are not taught to regard their “best friends, their kindred, as enemies and despisers of them, on account of their religion”—although the treatment which they sometimes receive from their former friends is of a character to rivet this impression upon them. Nor are they taught that “they may mingle with promiscuous crowds, amidst vulgar sports, vicious excesses, and profane oaths, and not lose their good name.” And we can frame no excuse for a

man, who has had as many opportunities as Mr. Dewey, for becoming acquainted with respectable Orthodox clergymen, who can allow himself in making such injurious assertions. The offence which has provoked them, we can indeed divine. Our ministers do not copy the example which is set them by some of the Unitarian clergy, in attending balls, and theatres, and parties of sinful pleasure; nor do they countenance an attendance upon such places, in the members of their churches. Others may, if they please, regard these amusements as “cheerful and polished recreations;” and regard those who discourage them as “distorting the rational and cheerful religion we profess.” But we have not so learned Christ. And Orthodox ministers and Christians we hope will not cease to bear their testimony against all those scenes of levity and sin, which, while they gratify the dissipated and thoughtless, and nurture “the pride of life,” are calculated to banish seriousness, unfit for devotion, and disgust and starve the spiritual mind.

Orthodox ministers are farther charged with “a want of enlarged and liberal views.” The only instance of this mentioned, is their “setting the interests of the present world in opposition to those of the world to come,” and representing a life of religion as a painful but needful *penance*, to be performed for the salvation of the soul.—But Mr. D., notwithstanding his Orthodox education, is entirely mistaken on this subject. This, we aver, is not the ground, on which Orthodox ministers urge and enforce the duties of religion. Our Saviour did indeed say, “Whosoever he be of you, that forsaketh

not *all* that he hath, cannot be my disciple." But what is the meaning? Not that those, who profess themselves the disciples of Christ, should literally and at once forsake all that they have; but that they hold all in subordination to their love of Christ, and be ready to forsake it, when he, in his providence, shall call. And Dr. Watts says, in the truly devotional lines which Mr. D. has quoted,

"I give my mortal interest up,
And make my God my all."

But what is the meaning? Not that Dr. Watts, or any other disciple, does literally and at once renounce all temporal interests and enjoyments; but that he seeks and finds his chief happiness, not in these, but in God, and is ready to renounce all, at the bidding of his Divine Master. On the subject before us, we believe, and we inculcate, the sentiment of the inspired writers, that "the ways of wisdom are ways of *pleasantness*, and all her paths are *peace*"—that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the *life that now is*, and of that which is to come"—and that "*in keeping the divine commandments there is great reward.*" We quote with full credence, and with entire approbation, the expressive lines of our Orthodox brother Doddridge,

"Live while you live, the epicure would say,
And seize the pleasures of the passing day.
Live while you live, the tatter'd monk replies,
And wait your happiness in yonder skies.
In me, dear Saviour, both united be;
I live in pleasure, while I live to thee."*

The last objection of Mr. D. to the ministrations of the Orthodox is, that they are not characterised by "*real and close dealing with the conscience.*" A very singular

objection, truly, to come from a Unitarian! The very same which thousands and millions among the Orthodox would make, to preaching on the other side! "It does not arouse the slumbering conscience. It does not excite and affect the heart."—If then each side accuses the other of a want of thorough and faithful dealing with the conscience, how shall the point at issue be decided? By what criterion shall it be determined, which of the two is most in fault? We know of no safer method than an appeal to facts. Under what preaching is the slumbering conscience most frequently awakened? Under what preaching is the stupid soul most frequently disquieted and alarmed? Under what preaching are there the most frequent and noticeable reformations, and the deepest apparent convictions of sin? We have no fear as to the result of an appeal like this. The instances of a distress for sin, and consequent reformation, if they occur at all among Unitarians, are certainly "*few and far between*;" while they are of continual occurrence, under the ministrations of the Orthodox.—The celebrated Dr. Chalmers may be regarded as an unexceptionable witness on this point. For twelve long years, he preached much after the manner of our Unitarians, inculcating their doctrines, and enforcing moral duties, with earnestness and eloquence; but in all this time, he declares that "*he never once heard of any reformations having been effected among his people.*"* And it was not till he changed his style of preaching, with his sentiments, and became a determined defender of the Orthodox faith, that he was per-

* We quote from memory, and not perhaps with verbal accuracy.

* See Chalmers's Farewell Discourse to his Parishioners of Kilmany.

mitted to witness any desirable fruit of his labors.—On the question of close and faithful dealing with the conscience, we may safely appeal to the whole Unitarian community. Have they ever known persons to leave their parishes, and unite with the Orthodox, on the ground that their preaching was too close and impressive, and gave them too much uneasiness in their courses of sin? Can they point us to a single instance of this kind? But hundreds have left Orthodox parishes and joined the Unitarians, on this very ground. They could not gratify their appetites and passions, and live in pleasure as they wished, and hear the solemn, searching truths, which every returning Sabbath brought to their ears.

The Tract here reviewed is, on the whole, an able production of its kind. The style is unequal—in some places loose and careless, but in others flowing and even eloquent. The method too is not simple or clear. Still, the book is fitted to have an influence; and its whole influence, we regret to say, will be in opposition to the truth.—What a solemn responsibility those are taking upon themselves, and what a fearful account they must expect to render, who, being blessed with talents, and with the means of exerting an extended influence, are exerting all their talents, and all their influence, to subvert the doctrine of the Apostles; to spread another Gospel; and to shut out their fellow men from a spiritual acquaintance with Him, “whom to know aright is life eternal!”

We are next to consider, “A Discourse on the Evidences of Revealed Religion; by William

E. Channing, D. D.”—the only Tract perhaps in the series, which may not properly be termed *sectarian*. A leading object of the discourse is to meet and refute the great objection to the Christian revelation, “that *miracles are incredible* ;” and that the supernatural character of an alleged fact is proof enough of its falsehood.” In disposing of this objection, which we are happy to say Dr. C. has done, in a very able and satisfactory manner, he encounters, as might have been expected, the celebrated argument of Mr. Hume, in opposition to miracles. This had been previously answered by Dr. Campbell; but several considerations are here subjoined, which serve to render that answer more convincing and complete. Indeed, this argument of Hume, of which so much was once boasted, is now seen to be no better than a specious sophism—a lamentable instance of the power of prejudice, in blinding and deceiving an ingenious and inquisitive mind.—It is well observed by Dr. C., while on the subject of miracles, that “Christianity is not only confirmed by them, but is in itself, in its very essence, a *miraculous religion*.” It is, what “it professes to be, a *supernatural communication from God*.”

Having removed the objection against miracles, Dr. C. “proceeds to consider the *evidences of the Christian religion* ;” or rather, he states and illustrates the *general principle*, into which all the evidences of Christianity may be resolved. It is merely this, that “*every effect must have an adequate cause*.” The Christian religion he considers an *effect*, for which, in many points of view, no adequate cause can be assigned, except the

special interposition of the Almighty. This part of the subject, like the other, is very ably discussed, and Christianity is shown to be, "not of earthly origin, but a ray from the everlasting light; a stream from the fountain of heavenly wisdom and love."

The truth of our religion being thus established, Dr. C. concludes, in the following eloquent and impressive manner :

"This religion, if true, is the greatest of all truths, deserving and demanding our reverent attention, and fervent gratitude. This religion must never be confounded with our common blessings. It is a revelation of pardon, which, as sinners, we all need. Still more, it is a revelation of human immortality; a doctrine which, however undervalued amidst the bright anticipations of inexperienced youth,* is found to be our strength and consolation, and the only effectual spring of persevering and victorious virtue, when the realities of life have scattered our visionary hopes; when pain, disappointment, and temptation press upon us; when this world's enjoyments are found unable to quench that deep thirst of happiness which burns in every breast; when friends, whom we love as our own souls, die; and our own graves open be-

fore us.—To all who hear me, and especially to my young hearers, I would say, let the truth of this religion be the strongest conviction of your understandings; let its motives and precepts sway, with an absolute power, your characters and lives."

We regard this discourse with unqualified approbation, and should rejoice to see it in the hands of all our readers. The subject is most important, and it is treated in a manner to instruct and interest the different classes of society. Our single regret is, that one who has so well defended Christianity in the general, should be left to pervert and distort it, as we think Dr. C. has done, in some of his recent publications. But on these we forbear, at present, to remark. We thank him for the discourse here noticed; and we thank the committee of the American Unitarian Association, for giving it to the public in a cheap form. If they will publish no worse Tracts than this, the task of reviewing them will be much more pleasant than it has hitherto been, and than, we fear, it is likely to be, in the time to come.

* This discourse was delivered before the University in Cambridge, at the Duddleian Lecture, March 14, 1821.

No. V.

THE ninth Tract in the series is entitled "Causes of the Progress of Liberal Christianity in New England." It is *assumed* by the writer, that the Unitarians of New England have widely departed from the religious system of the early settlers of this country. "Never," says he, "has there been a *change greater or more remarkable*." (p. 3.) It is farther *assumed*, that this change consists in a series of improve-

ments—a great increase of light and knowledge which entitle it to be regarded as a *reformation*. And still farther it is *assumed*, that this reformation has advanced more rapidly and gloriously in New England, than in any other part of the Christian world. For this last fact, three specific reasons are assigned: First, "the character of our puritan ancestors;" second, "the popular cast of our religious institutions;" and

third, "the interest taken by intelligent laymen in theological discussions."

The *first* assumption of this writer we admit—in as strong terms as he has expressed it. Unitarians have departed widely indeed from the religious system of their "puritan ancestors;" and the changes they have effected in some places are as remarkable as they are great. It is remarkable that they should be able to introduce an entirely new order of things—another Saviour, and another Gospel—into some of the largest and wealthiest congregations in the land, and to do it with so much secrecy and art, that no great commotions should be excited, and no livings forfeited—that few should be disquieted, or alarmed, or suspect indeed that any change was going on, until the whole was accomplished, and they were prepared to acquiesce in it.

The *second* assumption we of course deny; and hope to make it appear, before we are through, that this denial is not without reason.

Respecting the *third*, we are still in doubt, the confidence expressed by the writer of the Tract, notwithstanding. We have yet to learn, that the progress of Unitarianism in this country, during the last thirty or forty years, has been more rapid than it has been in other countries, and at other periods—more rapid than it was in the East, in the days of Arius; or than it was in Poland, in the days of the younger Socinus; or than it has been more recently in some parts of Europe. But this is a point of very little consequence.

The great questions to be decided are these; whether Unitarianism is indeed an *improvement*

upon the religious system of our Puritan ancestors; and whether its introduction and progress in New England have been effected by the operation of *causes* such as the writer of the Tract assigns.

Unitarians often speak of themselves as *reformers*, and seem to think that they are very piously engaged in carrying forward the reformation from Popery. Luther, and those who followed him, did what they could; but they were very far from accomplishing the work which they commenced. They were enabled to break away from the spiritual tyranny of Rome, and to expose and abolish some of the Popish errors and abuses in point of order and discipline; but it was left for Unitarians of the nineteenth century to finish the work of reformation, by exposing and extirpating the remaining errors and delusions of Popery, particularly in regard to doctrines.*

In considering this subject, it will be needful to ascertain as definitely as possible, in what this new reformation from Popery consists, and to what lengths it has been already carried. By this means, our readers will be able to judge for themselves whether it is more properly a reformation, or a relapse—a high advance in religious knowledge, or a reverting back to the exploded heresies of other times.

These self-styled reformers begin with rejecting the *plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures*.† They next discard the doctrine of the *Trinity*, regarding the Son (to use their own language) as "infinitely inferior" to the Fa-

* See Christian Examiner, vol. iii. p. 76.

† See Christian Register, Nov. 4, 1826. Also, "Improved Version of New Testament," and "Le Clerc on Inspiration," both of which have been published, with high encomiums, by Unitarians of New England.

ther, and denying that there is, in the sense commonly received, any Holy Ghost.* They deny the original *apostacy* of man. "It is not," we are told, "the way of heaven with our race, to begin with that which is perfect, and let decline and corruption succeed."† They deny the doctrine of *total depravity*, insisting that "wickedness, so far from being the prevailing part of human character, makes but an *inconsiderable part* of it."‡ They describe *regeneration* as "a change, either from the Jewish religion, or the idolatrous religion of the Gentiles, to the open profession and sincere belief of the Christian religion;" but that the term "is without meaning," when applied to those who have been born and educated under the Gospel.§ As to the *atonement*, they openly declare, that they "would resort to the less chilling creed of the Atheist, rather than admit it."|| *Justification by faith in Christ*, is also rejected. "To build the hope of pardon on the independent and infinite sufficiency of Jesus Christ, is to build on an unscriptural and false foundation." "Those persons deceive themselves, who, in the apprehension of death, lay hold on the merits of Christ, and expect to enter heaven in consequence."¶ The *future and eternal punishment of the wicked*, "is another doctrine which," as we are told, "most Unitarians of the present day concur in rejecting."** They disbelieve the existence of *fallen angels*, and probably also of *holy*

angels, representing the language of scripture on this subject as "imagery borrowed from the oriental philosophy, and not to be taken in a literal sense."* Unitarians discard the idea of a *Church*, as separate from the congregation. "The distinction attempted to be kept up between the two," they tell us, "is in most respects artificial, and without a counterpart in nature." They hold that the property of the church is the property of the congregation; and that the sacrament of the Lord's supper should be open alike to all. "We have no more business," say they, "to shut up this ordinance to a peculiar and chosen few, than we have to treat in a similar manner any of the public services of the sanctuary. We have as much right to stand upon the threshold of a church, and to forbid any worshipper to enter, as to stand before the communion table, and forbid him to approach." Some indeed maintain that every one, whether layman or clergyman, is authorised and qualified to administer the special ordinances of the gospel.† Unitarians differ from the generality of Christians in regard to the observance of the *Sabbath*. They think "there is a general superstition and a Puritanical strictness" on this subject, "which infects and injures the minds of multitudes in this country. We want," say they, "no demure looks, nor gloomy penances, on a day which is pre-eminently designed for the promotion of religion and happiness. There ought to be no unnecessary or severe restraints enjoined."—

* Chris. Disciple, New Series, v. i. p. 386.

† Chris. Examiner, vol. iii. p. 17.

‡ Ware's Letters to Trin. and Cal. p. 24.

§ Chris. Disciple, 1822, pp. 419, 420.

|| See Lamson's ordination ser. at Danvers.

¶ Chris. Disciple, New Se. vol. i. p. 440,

and Chris. Register, Nov. 4, 1826.

** Chris. Dis. New Series, vol. iii. p. 451, and Bancroft's Sermons, pp. 391—409.

* Improved Version of New Test. *passim*, especially p. 422.

† Chris. Register, Sept. 16, 1826, and Ch. Examiner, vol. iii. p. 10, and Mr. Colman's speech before the American Unitarian Association, May 29, 1827.

Children especially ought to be indulged with suitable recreations.* Unitarians are totally averse to an *examination into the religious opinions* of persons, under any pretence, or on any occasion whatever. "No such examination of candidates for ordination, or for admission to our communion or fellowship, with whatever softening pretences it may be proposed, should ever be acquiesced in."† Indeed they hold that mere *error* is innocent, and of no account. "The denunciations of heaven were never uttered against error of faith, but error of practice." "Jesus neither condemned, censured, nor judged any man for his errors."‡ And yet with marvellous consistency, Unitarians denounce the whole system of the Orthodox as "absurd, unscriptural, and *pernicious*," declaring that they consider "transubstantiation itself a *less monstrous doctrine* than the five points of Calvin."||

We might proceed to greater lengths; but the disclosures already made will enable our readers to judge of the nature of the changes attempted to be introduced, and of the justness of their claims to be regarded as improvements. Unitarians flatter one another with the appellation of *reformers*; and they are endeavoring to pass off this imposition upon the world. But instead of carrying forward the reformation of the sixteenth century, they are laboring to pull down every thing, which those early reformers established, at the peril of their lives, and with the price of their blood. And in place of the actual

system of the reformers, they are substituting errors very nearly resembling those, which infested, and troubled, and in some instances rent, the reformed Churches. Our Unitarians would have us believe that they are making great improvements, and have received a vast increase of light, on the subject of religion. But there were Unitarians in the sixteenth century, as well as now; and some who very nearly resembled those of the present day. The reformers were acquainted with them, and with their doctrine; and had they thought it consistent with the Bible they might have embraced it. But so far from this, they rejected and abhorred it. They reasoned, they expostulated, with those who did embrace it; and if incorrigible, excluded them from their company and fellowship.* And could these devoted men, from the celestial glory, now hear and reply to the pretensions of Unitarians in New England to be their coadjutors and followers, we are bound to believe they would disown them. They might be expected to say, 'your foundation and ours is infinitely different: You trust in your own merits; we in the merits of Christ. You think your robes have never been much defiled; ours have been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. You refuse divine honors to the Saviour; but we unite forever with the heavenly host in saying, worthy is the *Lamb that was slain* to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the *Lamb*, forever and ever.'

And Unitarians have as little

* Chris. Examiner, vol. iv. p. 115, and Ch. Register, March 11, 1826.

† Chris. Disciple, 1822, p. 54.

‡ Unit. Mis. 1822, p. 175, and 1821, p. 54.

|| Chris. Examiner, vol. iii. p. 76, and Mr. Gannet's speech before Amer. Unit. Assoc. May 29, 1827.

* See Mosh. Ecc. Hist. vol. iv. p. 471.

claim to be considered the genuine followers of the *Puritans*, as they have of the reformers. It is customary for them to extol the Puritans, especially the early settlers of New England. Nothing is too good, or too honorable, to be said, on certain occasions, in praise of these adventurous and excellent men. But as our Saviour once said to the Pharisees, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham;" so now it may be said to Unitarians, "If ye were the followers of the Puritans, ye would believe their doctrines, and imitate their worthy example." It was the religious *doctrines* of our ancestors which brought them to this country. Had they believed, with modern Unitarians, that mere differences of opinion are of little consequence, and that no man is culpable for his errors; they never would have come here. Their religious doctrines were, not the accidental appendages, but the very elements of their character. These constituted them what they were. With other views of religious truth, they must have been totally different men. On what grounds, then, do those, who reject their religious system throughout, and whose characters are formed under the influence of another Gospel, pretend to be their genuine followers, and their most devoted friends?

It is amusing to consider the various pretences under which Unitarians lay claim to an almost exclusive discipleship of the Puritans.—One is, the Puritans were friends of *religious liberty* and of *free inquiry*; and so, say Unitarians, are *we*.* And what denomi-

nation of Christians can be found in New England, who will not respond with them, "So are *we*"? One would think, from the language of Unitarians on this subject, that all around them were in bondage, and that they alone had achieved their spiritual independence. But the truth is, other denominations are as free as they. Others think as they please on the subject of religion, and worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences.—Unitarians seem to infer, because others do not coincide with them, that they cannot possibly be at liberty to judge and act for themselves. But the truth is, other denominations do not coincide with them, because they *are* thus at liberty. They do think as they please on the subject of religion, and for this very reason they are not, and never can be, Unitarians.

In the Tract before us, Unitarians claim moral affinity with their Puritan ancestors, because like them, say they, "we shrink not from an avowal of our dissent from popular and long established errors, from a dread of the cry of innovation." (p. 8.) On reading this, our minds involuntarily reverted to certain published letters which passed from Unitarians in this country to those in England, several years ago. Unitarianism, says a distinguished promoter of the doctrine in Boston, "has spread *very extensively* in New England; but I believe there is only one Church *professedly* Unitarian." Another letter-writer, in the same sentiment, attempts an apology for the studied *concealment* practised by the Unitarian ministers of Boston, in the

* Those who wish to see the good feelings of some Unitarians, and their very ardent love of Christian liberty, most illustriously

exemplified, may recur to facts published pp. 319, 320, of the last Vol. of the Christian Magazine.

following terms: "Can it be expected, upon the common principles of human nature, of a body of clergy, nursed in the lap of ease and affluence, and placed in a station of such high secular consideration and comfort, as that of the ministers in Boston, that they should come forward, and by an *open profession of unpopular truth, voluntarily risk the loss of all their temporal dignity and comfort, and incur the contempt and enmity of many, who are now their warmest admirers and friends?* Who will venture to say of himself, that his virtue would be equal to the trial?"* Yet the Unitarian ministers of Boston have now the effrontery to claim alliance with the dauntless Puritans, on the ground of their open and intrepid inculcation of unpopular truth!! "We, like those lion-hearted Christians who first visited our shores, never shrink from an avowal of our dissent from popular and long established errors, from a dread of the cry of innovation, or from the fear of forfeiting our temporal dignity and comfort"!!

But the most ridiculous of all the pretences, on which Unitarians claim affinity with the Puritans, is, not that the Puritans were with them in sentiment, (this is not pretended) but *they believe they would be with them in sentiment, if they were alive at the present time.* Says the writer of the Tract, "I believe, as I believe I live, that if the Fathers of New England, if Robinson, and Higginson, Bradford, and Winthrop, had been born two hundred years later, they would have been found among our warmest and most effective coadjutors." (p. 8.) This truly is a singular ground of al-

leged discipleship—such, we presume, as was never urged before—and such as any other denomination on earth might urge, with equal reason. Should the Quakers, some of whom had the misfortune to be hung, for their vagaries, in the early days of New England—or the Universalists—or the Swedenborgians, claim to be the genuine followers of the Puritans, because they "believe, as they believe they live, that if the Puritans had been born two hundred years later, they would have been found among their warmest and most effective coadjutors;" the pretence would be just as reasonable in their mouths, as it is in the mouths of modern Unitarians. The truth is our Puritan ancestors were not Quakers, or Universalists, or Swedenborgians; and *neither were they Unitarians.* And the reason why they were not was, not, as the writer of the Tract insinuates, that they were not sufficiently advanced in religious knowledge, and that sufficient truth had not yet "beamed from the sacred word:" for there were Unitarians in the days of our Fathers, and all the leading errors, which have since been broached on the subject of the Trinity, had been broached then. Arius, and Socinus, and a hundred others, had denied this doctrine; and every possible theory respecting the person of Christ had been, by one and another, adopted and inculcated. Pelagius had denied the doctrines of depravity and regeneration. And Arminius had assailed Calvinism at all points, with as much learning and ability as it has ever been assailed since. Our Fathers were not so rude and ignorant that they had never heard of these things. They had heard of them, and they knew them well. They knew

* History of American Unitarianism, pp. 41—46.

as much about Unitarianism, as they desired to know, or as they needed to know; and had they been disposed to embrace it, they had a fair opportunity. But they rejected it. They abhorred it. They could not find it in their Bibles, nor could they find any thing congenial with it, in the temper of their hearts. Had it followed them, they would have extirpated it, or they would have fled from it. Had it been urged upon them, they would have resisted it, even unto death. And could they have foreseen that, in less than two centuries, it would spring up in the Churches they were planting, and in the Seminary they were consecrating to the glory of their Saviour, perverting their charities, and poisoning the principles of their children; what would have been their astonishment and grief! The prospect would have wrung their hearts! They would have wept over it, with tears of blood! And yet their Unitarian successors and descendants now rise up and say, "If our Fathers had known as much as we, they would have been Unitarians too! If they had been born two hundred years later, they would have been our warmest and most effective coadjutors!" The poor Pilgrims, it seems, believed and acted as well as they knew, but they did not know but little. They had not made those vast attainments, of which their children vaunt. The reformation from Popery had then but just begun; and the science of "not believing," which is laid down as a first principle of the Unitarian school, was not understood so thoroughly as it is at present.

But though our Puritan ancestors did not know enough to be Unitarians, they knew enough, it

seems, to pave and prepare the way for its introduction and progress in future years; as the writer of the Tract before us mentions their *character* and *example* as a first and principal reason of the present prevalence of Unitarianism in New England.—But this is assigning a very strange influence to the example of the worthy Pilgrims. We had supposed that a good example ordinarily had influence, by furnishing inducements for *imitation*. The proper influence of Christ's example is to make us *like* him. And this is the legitimate influence of all good example. But the good example of the Puritans we are told has had a directly contrary influence. It has contributed to introduce and spread a system of religion, such as they rejected and abhorred. They were, to a man, the undoubting believers and promoters of the *Orthodox faith*. The doctrines of Christ's divinity and atonement, of depravity and regeneration, of saints' election and perseverance, with others of a kindred nature, constituted the special nutriment of their souls. These were "the sincere milk of the word," upon which they fed, and by which they thrived. And yet *their example* is now assigned as a reason for the rejection of all these doctrines, and for the introduction of an opposite system—the prevalence of another Gospel! Our Puritan Fathers were the founders and unfailing friends of the *Churches* of New England, strengthening them by their example and influence, and sustaining them by their charities and their prayers. And yet *their example* is now assigned as a prime reason for the introduction of a system, which is breaking down these Churches, stripping them

of their funds, denying them the right to elect their own Pastors, opening their communion to the world, and which is in fact merging them in those mere civil corporations with which they severally stand connected! Our Fathers were also the friends of the *sabbath*, observing it with exemplary devotedness, as near as they were able according to the requisitions of the divine law. But *their example* is now assigned as a reason for the introduction of a system, which "wants no demure looks" upon this sacred day, and sneers even at the imperfect manner in which Orthodox Christians endeavour to keep it, as "a general superstition, and a Puritanical strictness!" But enough of this. The charging of the prevalence of Unitarianism in New England upon the example of our Puritan Ancestors, is the most ridiculous charge ever made, or ever attempted to be refuted. "It is time," says the writer of the Tract, "for men to be done with the senseless clamor, that Unitarians have departed from the principles of the Fathers of New England." But we reply, 'It is time for Unitarians to be done with the senseless clamor, that they have *not* departed from the principles of the Fathers of New England.' The truth is, they have departed from these principles, *toto cælo*. In the religious world, they, and their Puritan ancestors, are perfect antipodes. Unitarians cannot preach a sermon, in consistency with their own principles, without condemning the principles of their Fathers. They cannot take a step, or lift a hand, for the advancement of their religious system, without virtually passing a vote of censure upon the system

of the early settlers of this happy country.

Unitarians may think to atone for their dereliction of the principles of their Fathers, by heaping honors upon their names and memories; but the thought is vain. For after all they can say, the truth of the case remains the same. If their Fathers were right, they are wrong; and if they are right, their Fathers were wrong. They cannot honor their Fathers, without condemning themselves; and they cannot honor themselves, without condemning their Fathers. The truth cannot by any means be concealed or disguised, that Unitarians are a totally different sort of men from the early settlers of this country. In a religious view, there is no communion, or fellowship, or even resemblance, between them. And Unitarianism, so far from being introduced among us by the example of our ancestors, was introduced in *face* of their example. It was introduced, and has prevailed, in *opposition* to the whole weight of their example and influence.

The second cause of the progress of Unitarianism in New England "is to be found," says the Tract, "in the *popular cast of our religious institutions*." The great body of professing Christians in New England are Congregationalists; and in Massachusetts especially, where Unitarianism has chiefly prevailed, the Churches are not consociated, but retain their individual independence. Hence it is concluded, that the strictly Congregational or Independent form of Church government, is peculiarly favorable to the spread of this doctrine. —For ourselves, we can see no necessary connexion between this

conclusion, and the fact on which it is made to rest. We are ourselves Congregationalists. We are so from principle—from choice; and we can discover no manner of connexion between the peculiarities of Congregational government, and the spread of Unitarian errors. There is not, so far as appears, the remotest tendency in the former to produce the latter. True, Unitarianism has spread in New England, where Congregationalism prevails; but it has spread in other countries, where Congregationalism does not prevail. It spread in the East, in the time of Arius, when the Churches were, in a modified sense, Episcopalian. It has spread in Geneva, where the Churches are Presbyterian. It has extended itself in the different religious establishments of Germany. And in England, while the great body of the Independents or Congregationalists adhere to the principles of the Orthodox faith, nearly all the old Presbyterian churches are said to have become Unitarian.* Facts like these perfectly satisfy us, and they are of a nature, we think, to satisfy the public, that whatever other causes may have contributed to the promotion of Unitarianism in New England, its introduction and progress are not to be charged to the account of Congregationalism.

The last cause mentioned for the progress of Unitarianism among us is "*the interest taken by intelligent laymen in theological discussions.*"—We have but one scruple as to admitting the alleged operation of this cause; and that arises from our doubts as to the existence of the cause itself. We are not yet certain that intelligent laymen, in this part of our coun-

try, have commonly been more interested in theological discussions, than they have in some other parts, or in some other countries.—We are aware, that even intelligent laymen too frequently have very little connected knowledge of theology; and what they have, is often of that kind which "puffeth up." While they are mere smatterers in divine things, they are apt to regard themselves as "wiser than their teachers." And when their teachers are willing to be duped and directed by them, we can conceive of disastrous errors as being the probable result. But we are not aware that this has been the case here, more than in many other places. We do not believe that intelligent laymen have taken more interest in theological discussions in New England, than they have in Old England; and we are quite sure that they have not in Massachusetts, the principal seat of Unitarianism, more than they have in Connecticut, where lives but a single Unitarian congregation. For obvious reasons, the Orthodox clergy of New England are objects of the special dislike of Unitarians—a feeling which they miss no good opportunity of expressing. In discussing the topic now under consideration, our author has several comparisons between clergymen and laymen, which ought not to pass unnoticed.—He urges at some length, that the opinions of laymen on theological subjects are deserving of more regard than those of clergymen. But is it not strange, that the opinions of professed theologians—those who make theology the study of their lives, should be entitled to less regard than the opinions of those, who attend to it only on incidental occasions? What would be

* See Sabine's Ecclesiastical History.

thought of a similar declaration, coming from either of the other professions? Suppose the members of the Boston Bar should publish to the world, that the opinions of lawyers on subjects of jurisprudence were entitled to less regard, than those of any other class of the community. Or suppose a committee of the Massachusetts' Medical Society should publicly and solemnly declare, that physicians were of all men the least acquainted with the science of medicine. What would be thought of such declarations? And what would be thought of such men? They ought in all conscience immediately to disband, and not trouble the world farther with pretensions, which themselves declared were worse than useless. And yet, a committee of the American Unitarian Association—a committee of *clergymen*—not only assert before the public, but labor to prove, that the opinions of clergymen on theological subjects are deserving of less regard than those of laymen! With what face can these reverend gentlemen ever again put on their robes, and lay claim to the titles, the attention, and the respect of clergymen? And what reply could they make to any intelligent layman, who should please to say to them, ‘Give me your place, and you take mine. As I know more than you on the subject of religion, why should not I be the teacher, and you the learner? Why should not I take the pulpit, and you the slip?’

The writer of the Tract asserts, that in the pretended reformation which Unitarians are thinking to carry on in New England, the laity, and not the clergy, have taken the lead. He also asserts, that “the clergy, as

a body, never yet led the way in improvement, and never will. The people always were before them, and probably always will be.” (p. 15.) We will not here dispute the point, whether clergymen or laymen have been the most active in endeavoring to spread Unitarianism in New England. It will be in time to decide, to whom the honor of this boasted reformation belongs, when it is well ascertained whether it is a reformation, or not. But we must call in question the truth of the declaration, that “*clergymen never yet led the way in any improvement*”—in any public reformation. In their stations, and with their advantages, it would be a shame to them, if this declaration were true; but to the confusion of those clergymen who have published the disgraceful declaration, it may be shown conclusively that it is not true. Who, we ask, are entitled to the credit of spreading Christianity in the primitive age? It was a body of *clergymen*. Peter, and James, and John, and Paul, and all the Apostles of our Lord, were clergymen. And who are entitled to the credit of disenthraling the world from papal bondage? Undoubtedly *clergymen*. Wickliffe was a clergyman. John Huss was a clergyman. Luther and Zuingli were clergymen. Calvin, and Knox, and Cranmer, were clergymen. Indeed, in every stage of this perilous business, we find clergymen standing in the front rank, and fearlessly breasting the bloody onset. And who, we ask farther, are now taking the lead, in the great and benevolent work of spreading the Gospel among the heathen? Who are traversing land and ocean—and exposing themselves in distant and sultry climes, not to en-

rich and aggrandize themselves, but with a view to the spiritual and temporal welfare of their fellow men? They are *clergymen*. The leading missionaries, everywhere, are clergymen;—and those who take the lead in measures for the support of missions, belong to the same class. The English Baptist Missionary Society had its origin in an Association of clergymen. The London Missionary Society was formed at the instance, and by the instrumentality, of clergymen. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions originated in the General Association of Massachusetts, a meeting composed exclusively of clergymen. Other facts of the same nature might be stated; but they need not be. It is too evident to be proved or denied, that in all the various benevolent efforts, which are now blessing a sinful world, clergymen have stood first and foremost. And yet we hear a committee of clergymen, in and around the metropolis of New England, venting (shall we say) their *spleen* against their professional brethren of all denominations, countries, and ages, past, present, and to come, by publishing before the world, that “*the clergy, as a body, never yet led the way in improvement, and never will!! The people always were before them, and probably always will be!!*”!*

The remarks here made, it will be seen, are not at all of a party nature. They are in a common cause, and on a subject in which clergymen, of every name, are

vitaly interested. And we have no fear, however closely they may bear upon particular individuals, that they will not commend themselves to the consciences of all the friends of the clergy, and the lovers of truth, throughout our country.

As we dissent from the account given by the writer of this Tract of the manner in which Unitarianism has been introduced and propagated in New England, perhaps it will be thought incumbent on us to give our own views in relation to this subject. In doing this, we can little more than repeat the facts which were published, in an authentic history of American Unitarianism, in 1815.—It appears that the first Unitarian minister (Dr. Freeman) was settled in Boston, Nov. 18, 1787. By the labors of this zealous believer in the doctrine, aided by those of a Mr. Hazlitt, in conversing with individuals, and in placing the English Unitarian Tracts in the library of the University, and in most of the social libraries of the city, an impression was ere long made upon the minds of numbers. In opposition to the account given by the writer of the Tract, Dr. Freeman asserts, in a letter written probably in 1797, “*The clergy are generally the FIRST who begin to speculate; but the people soon follow, where they are so much accustomed to read and inquire.*”*. The leaven continued to work with considerable power, though with studied secrecy, for a long time; for so late as in 1811, and we believe in 1815, no church in Boston had come out openly on the Unitarian side, except that of Dr. Freeman. But the publication of the history, of which we have spoken, and the controversy

* We speak of this committee as composed of clergymen. It is so, with a single exception. They doubtless regard their publications as open to remark; and they will not, we trust, complain, as the name of the writer of the Tract now before us is withheld, that we consider them responsible for its contents.

* Hist. American Unitarianism, p. 23.

which immediately followed—all in 1815—produced “no small stir” in the Unitarian camp, and were the means of unmasking many, who had long endeavored to be concealed. Those who really *were* Unitarians, were soon obliged to be such openly; and from that time to the present, we do not believe the doctrine has made much progress in New England. In Boston, it has been, and is, in a comparative view, declining. If its numbers have increased at all, they have not increased in any proportion so rapidly as those of the Orthodox. And in different parts of the

country, though many who were Unitarians before have avowed their sentiments, and some new societies have been formed; we do not think the error itself has made much progress. And, under God, we have now no great fear of its progress in future. The thing has been drawn forth from its lurking places to the light of day—it has been made palpable—people can examine it for themselves—and it lives, henceforth, but to be shunned, and to perish with “the hay, wood, and stubble,” when the coming “fire shall try every man’s work, of what sort it is.”

No. VI.

THE tenth Tract in the series is entitled, “Remarks on a Popular Error respecting the Lord’s Supper, by F. W. P. Greenwood.” The error remarked upon, is substantially this—persons consider themselves in a measure free from the obligations of religion, until by an open profession of it, and by partaking of the Lord’s Supper, these obligations are voluntarily assumed. Consequently all who wish for the present to be unembarrassed with obligations of this nature, the mirthful, the fashionable, the worldly, and the scrupulous, very wisely, as they judge, conclude to defer a profession of their faith.

The error heresproken of (for an error undoubtedly it is) we think not uncommon, perhaps in every religious denomination. Persons seem to regard communion at the Lord’s table, and the other

duties which stand connected with it, as a kind of free will offering, which they may make, or not, as they think good. If they consent by an open profession, they are bound; but if not, they are not bound. The consequence is, that very many live quite easy in a neglect of the most important duties—in a life of irreligion if not immorality, on the ground that they have never taken upon themselves the obligations of Christians.

Mr. G. refutes this error very properly and successfully, by showing that our religious obligations are not of a nature to be taken up and laid aside at pleasure. They were imposed upon us at the commencement of our moral existence by the Author of our being. They are the result of the most necessary relations subsisting between ourselves and him. They bind “with the ada-

mantine strength of condition and necessity."

"It would be as proper," says he, "for a son to declare that he would not fulfil every filial obligation to his parents, till he appeared in court and took a legal oath that he would do so, as for the native of a christian land to declare that there were duties to his Maker which he did not intend, nor was he required to discharge, till he had openly allowed them; and the son, after having taken such an oath, might talk as consistently about his *new* obligations, as might the Christian, after the promise was passed, about his. They were both of them born with obligations, which neither of them can dismiss nor change; they might as well dismiss the air which they inhaled with their first breath, and throw off the atmosphere which envelopes the world."

But if a profession of religion brings with it no new duties, then what advantage hath it? What are its benefits? And why may it not, as a useless formality, be laid aside? To these questions, a very satisfactory answer may be given, though none is given in the Tract. The benefit of a profession of religion is, not that it imposes new duties—duties which were not previously binding, but that it furnishes additional *inducements* to the faithful performance of duty. It increases, in a sense, our *obligations* to be faithful; since, to all previous obligation, it superadds that arising from our own voluntary recognition and engagement. This benefit of a religious profession, and of stated communion at the Lord's table, is very obvious and great, and is one of which every considerate Christian will wish to avail himself. Sensible of his own exposure and weakness, he will wish to furnish himself with every inducement—to arm himself with all possible resolution, to be devoted and faithful in the service of that Being whom he supremely loves.

The subject of this Tract is

interesting and important, and we are not certain that our sentiments differ at all from those of Mr. G. respecting it; though doubtless we might have expressed them in somewhat different language. Were the subject enlarged, so as to include the *terms* of communion—what does, and what does not, *disqualify* for a proper partaking of the holy supper, we can foresee, from what is here incidentally dropped, that our regions of thought might be wide asunder. For instance, in addressing those who "like to be gay, gay in spirit, and gay in external appearance; who are passionately fond of dancing; who delight in going to splendid entertainments, and in splendidly entertaining their friends in return;" Mr. G. "presumes not to say that the way of life which they love is not innocent," or that it unfits them for communion with Christ at his table. (p. 7.) We think we *should* presume to ask persons of this description, whether they had ever read such scriptures as these, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." "Be not conformed to this evil world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds." "The friendship of the world is enmity with God; whosoever therefore will be a friend of this world is the enemy of God." "Walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil." "Abstain from all appearance of evil." "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God

will bring thee into judgment.”* We might presume to inquire of them, whether they were not “lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God,” and whether they must not experience an entire change of moral feeling, before they were prepared for communion with Christ, in private or in public, in this world or the future.

But notwithstanding some exceptions, we regard this Tract as a very respectable publication. It is short, but full, coming directly to the subject of which it treats, and disposing of it in as few words as possible. The style, if not the most forcible, is neat and perspicuous, and the whole is fitted to leave a favorable impression. We should gladly see it in the hands of many in our congregations, who are quietly neglecting important religious duties, on the mere ground that they have not *covenanted* to perform them;—just as though God had left it for us to say, not whether we should serve him or no, but whether we should be under *moral obligation* to serve him—whether we could neglect his service, and be guiltless.

We have now gone through with those Tracts, the titles of which were announced at the commencement of this Review. Since writing our first number, another Tract has made its appearance, to which, in conclusion, the attention of our readers is solicited. Its title is “Unitarianism vindicated against the charge of not going far enough.” Says the writer in his first sentence, “When all other objections to Unitarianism fail, it is common for opponents to say, that this system is very well as far as it goes, but it

does not go far enough.” “When all other objections to Unitarianism fail;”—there are other objections then, besides the one here under consideration. But says this same writer, in his last sentence, “Thus do we answer the objection, that Unitarians do not go far enough; and, as this objection virtually includes *every other*,” &c. This objection is here made to include *every other*; and consequently there can be no objection to Unitarianism separate from this.—Before the Tract goes to another edition, we hope the writer will bring his first and last sentences together, and inform us which of them he would have us believe. For ourselves, we really think there may be other objections, besides the one which he has undertaken to refute. We think Unitarianism may lie open to the charge, not only of “not going far enough,” but of not being “very well as far as it goes;” so that if our author succeeds in removing the former objection, the latter may still remain, and the controversy may not be at an end.

In his attempts to vindicate his religious system “against the charge of not going far enough,” the writer undertakes to prove, “that it goes far enough for *scripture*; far enough for *safety*; and far enough for *moral effect*.” It goes far enough for scripture, he says, in the views it inculcates “of the *person* and *authority* of Jesus Christ; of the *honor* due to him; and of the *reconciliation* or *atonement* he has effected.” (p. 4.) But in his endeavors to show this, by comparing his system, in its bearing on these great and interesting subjects, with that inculcated in the scriptures, the scriptures are very unfairly treated. They are not fully or impartially

* 1 John, ii. 15. Rom. xii. 2. James, iv. 4. Eph. v. 15. 1 Thes. v. 22. Ec. xi. 9.

consulted, and consequently are made to hold forth a sentiment, which they never were intended to convey. A class of passages is introduced, which, taken separately, may seem to favor Unitarian views, to the total neglect of another class, with which these should be compared, and by which they should be qualified; and then, without ceremony, the conclusion is drawn, that Unitarianism goes as far as the scriptures, and is, in fact, the religion of the Bible. But this is not treating the subject fairly. This is not fearlessly walking with the Unitarian doctrine through the whole length and breadth of scripture, to see whether they agree or not. We know there are passages, those for instance which speak of Christ as inferior to the Father and dependent on him, which are equally consistent with the views of Trinitarians and Unitarians respecting his person: For Trinitarians believe that Christ was, in a sense, inferior to the Father, and dependent on him. But in determining whether Unitarianism goes as far as the scriptures, there are other passages to be taken into the account. Christ is spoken of in the scriptures as "JEHOVAH our righteousness." He is spoken of as "the MIGHTY God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace." He "is God OVER ALL blessed forever." He "is the TRUE GOD and everlasting life." Saith the Father to the Son, "thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre." "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is be-

fore all things, and by him all things consist."* No one can doubt that these and similar passages are in the Bible, and that they are the actual representation of the Bible, in regard to the personal glory of the Saviour. Unitarians can determine for themselves, whether their scheme carries them as far as this. If it does, it carries them, on this point, far enough for scripture; if not, it is fearfully, infinitely deficient.

There are passages, relating to some of the duties which we owe to the Father, which harmonize equally with the views of Trinitarians and Unitarians; since we all agree that the Father is a proper object of religious worship, and the person to be more commonly addressed in prayer. But there are other passages, in which the *Son* is unequivocally represented as entitled to the worship of his saints. He was often worshipped during his abode on earth, and under circumstances which forbid the idea that a mere civil obeisance was intended. Stephen died upon his knees, while in the act of praying to his Saviour. Nearly all the epistles of Paul conclude with an ejaculatory prayer to the Lord Jesus. But to put the question of his title to religious worship beyond all dispute, the heavens were opened to the beloved John, and he heard the whole celestial choir offering their praises and adorations to the Son of God. He saw "the four beasts, and the four and twenty elders, fall down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints." He heard "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,

* Jer. xxiii. 6. Isa. ix. 6. Rom. ix. 5. 1 John, v. 20. Heb. i. 8. Col. i. 16.

saying with a loud voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.*" He heard every creature, in heaven and on earth, saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and to the *Lamb*, forever and ever." (See Rev. v. 8—13.) The scriptures then *do warrant* the offering of religious worship to the Saviour. Does Unitarianism warrant the same? If so, it goes as far, on this subject, as the scriptures. But if not, it falls infinitely short of the scriptures, in the honors which it ascribes to the Son of God.

We could better tell whether Unitarianism goes as far as the scriptures, in the views it inculcates respecting the death of Christ, if we knew precisely what these views were. "We look upon the death of Christ," says the writer of the Tract, "as the means by which he was made perfect; as affording a signal attestation to his sincerity; and as important and necessary for *other moral uses.*" (p. 7.) But *for what other moral uses*, we are not informed. "We believe," says he on one page, "that this voluntary sacrifice of Christ may have had a *direct influence on God in favor of mankind.*" (p. 7.) But in contradiction to this, we are told on the next page, that "the sufferings of Christ are part of the means of reconciling us to God, but *not of reconciling God to us.*" (p. 8.) Amidst all this uncertainty and contradiction, it is easy to see, however, that the great object of Christ's death, as set forth in the scriptures, is kept entirely out of sight. There is nothing said of his being "wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities"—of his making his life a ransom, a propitiation, a sacrifice for sinners—

or of his "bearing our sins in his own body on the tree." There is nothing said of his "giving himself for our sins"—"suffering for our sins"—"purging our sins"—"dying for our sins"—or shedding his blood "for the remission of sins." Accordingly there is nothing said, of our being "forgiven for Christ's sake," of our being "justified by his blood," "purchased with his blood," "redeemed by his blood," and "washed from our sins in his own blood."—There is no uncertainty or contradiction in the scriptures, respecting the great object of the Saviour's death. He died to make atonement for the sins of men. He died to open a way, in which "God could be just, and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." He died to lay a strong foundation, on which pardon could be freely dispensed to penitent, returning sinners. This is clearly the view, which Isaiah, and Paul, and Peter, and John, and which indeed Christ himself entertained, respecting the leading object of his death. Do Unitarians entertain the same? If so, they go as far as the scriptures on this fundamental subject. If not, they are chargeable with a deficiency, for which nothing can compensate.

We cordially unite with the writer of this Tract in saying, "To the law, and to the testimony." We hold the scriptures to be an authority, from which there is no appeal, and the standard by which all our speculations are to be tried. But let those who thus confidently appeal to the scriptures be willing to travel through the scriptures, and measure their system by the whole length and breadth of this unerring rule.—In view of the remarks which have been made,

we leave it to the decision of all impartial readers—we could almost leave it to Unitarians themselves—whether their scheme does not fall fearfully short of this rule, even in those points, on which they have themselves chosen that the comparison should be made. The scriptures represent the Lord Jesus Christ as “God,” “the mighty God,” “the true God,” the “God over all;” but Unitarianism represents him as something infinitely less. The scriptures represent him as a proper object of religious worship, and as actually receiving the solemn worship of saints on earth, and of glorified beings in heaven; but Unitarianism denies him this worship. The scriptures represent him as laying the only foundation in his blood, for the pardon of penitent, returning sinners. “Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” But Unitarians say, they “would resort to the less chilling creed of the Atheist, rather than admit” the doctrine of atonement by the blood of Christ. These, it will be recollected, are the three points, in relation to which the writer of the Tract proposes to show, that Unitarianism goes as far as the scriptures. But who, that has any tolerable acquaintance with the scriptures, can avoid seeing that he has utterly failed? Unitarianism and the Scriptures! There is such a palpable discrepancy between them—such a defection, a falling off, of the former from the latter, that if the one is true, the other cannot be! If the one is a revelation from God, the other, in all its distinguishing features, is clearly an invention of the world!

Our author’s second attempt is to show that “Unitarianism

goes far enough *for safety*.” Under this head, he has various wise remarks respecting the comparative danger of believing too much, and too little; and respecting the comparative guilt of refusing divine honors to the Saviour, on supposition he is God, and of worshipping him, on supposition he is not. He considers the conduct of those (if those there be) who pretend to be Calvinists, because, on Unitarian principles, the Calvinist may be saved, while, on Calvinistic principles, the Unitarian cannot be saved; and he endeavors to allay the fears of some, who think “the tendency of making any retrenchments on the popular faith, is to downright infidelity.”

We design not to follow him, in his remarks on these subjects, not because they contain nothing objectionable, or what it might be difficult to refute; but because we think them of very little consequence, especially in their bearing on the point in question. The point to be proved is, that “Unitarianism goes far enough *for safety* ;” or that the *soul of the Unitarian is safe*. But who does not see, that this proposition rests entirely upon the one already discussed? What do we know of the terms of salvation, or the qualifications for heaven, any farther than these are disclosed in the scriptures? If “Unitarianism goes far enough for scripture,” then doubtless it “goes far enough for safety.” But if it falls essentially short of the scriptures, no person should be induced to rest his soul upon it. Hence, we are thrown directly back upon the ground of scripture—the ground over which we have already passed. And we do think we have shown—incontestably shown—that Unitarianism falls

short of the religion of the Bible, in the most essential particulars. It makes *us*, in our natural state, very different beings from what the Bible represents us. It proposes a Saviour infinitely inferior to the one exhibited in the scriptures. It forbids that worship, which inspired men of old, and which saints and angels in heaven, have felt constrained to offer to the Son of God. But, above all, it takes away the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ—the only foundation of hope to the ruined sinner, directing him to seek forgiveness in some other way, than through the atoning blood of Jesus. A system so essentially defective, as well as erroneous, and coming so fearfully short of the Bible; how can it be safe? Denying the native guilt and ruin of man, his need of an almighty Saviour, and the fact that such a Saviour has appeared, and shed his blood for the remission of sins; how can it be safe? We judge not those who have embraced this system. We hope they may be better, in some instances, than a consistent adherence to their avowed principles would render them. But how can we think them renewed in the temper of their minds, when they deny that such a change is ordinarily needed or experienced? How can we think them washed in the blood of Christ, when they do not feel that they are naturally polluted, and do not believe that the blood of Christ was shed, or is ever applied, for the cleansing of the soul? We do not judge them; but if any of this class are in a safe condition for eternity, it must be, not because their system is safe, but because their characters have been formed under the influence of a better system. If any of them are pious, their piety

must be sustained, not by the principles which they have embraced, but in spite of them.

The writer of the Tract endeavors to show, in the third and last place, that “Unitarianism goes far enough for *moral effect*.” In urging this, he admits, that the faith of the Unitarian “has fewer objects” than that of the Calvinist; but he supposes that these few embrace all those great principles, which are of any considerable practical power. But here again we must be allowed to think differently. As it seems to us, it is those great doctrines of religion which the Unitarian rejects, which give to the Bible its amazing power—which render it “like the fire and hammer, which break the rock in pieces.” The doctrine of total depravity, clearly stated and closely urged, is that which awakens the slumbering conscience, and revives an affecting sense of sin. The doctrines of Christ’s divinity, incarnation, and atoning blood, though “to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness”—though rejected and despised by the “reasoning pride” of man—are still, in a pre-eminent degree, “the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” It is because our divine Saviour was “in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross”—it is because we regard him in this light, that we feel the influence of his bleeding love, constraining us to love him, follow him, and devote ourselves to him—constraining us to “live no

longer unto ourselves, but to him who died for us, and rose again." The doctrine of justification by faith alone, is fitted to abase our pride, to remove all ground of self-confidence and boasting, and brings us to a sole and simple reliance upon the sufficiency of our Saviour. And to particularize no farther; the future and eternal punishment of the wicked is a doctrine of great power, alarming the fears of the careless and profane, and exciting them to flee from the wrath to come. Take away these and the kindred doctrines, which the Unitarian rejects, and the Bible is, in a manner, neutralized. Its edge is blunted; its solemn interest has departed; its renovating power is gone. It no longer pricks the sinner to the heart; stops him in his career of guilt; and induces the agonizing cry, "Men and brethren, what shall I do?" Bereft of those doctrines which have been mentioned, the Gospel (if it be not a misnomer to call it Gospel) becomes cold and powerless, fitted rather to quiet the conscience than to arouse it, and to satisfy men with a worldly decency of external behaviour, in place of the warm and vigorous devotion of the heart.

These conclusions, formed *a priori*, are abundantly justified by facts. The decisions of Dr. Priestley, as to the superior religious character of Orthodox believers generally, and of Dr. Chalmers, as to the comparative efficacy of Orthodox and Unitarian preaching, as verified in his own experience, have been given in the preceding pages, (see pp. 14 and 41.) It is admitted also in the Tract before us, as "a remark often made," that "the characters formed under Trinitarian impressions are more strict,

serious, and devout, than those formed under Unitarian impressions." (p. 22.)

The writer of this Tract observes that "in many characters, formed under Calvinistic impressions, there is a certain *severity* and *extravagance*, from which every one must wish them free. This remark he applies particularly to Orthodox females, comparing them to Queen Mary, of whom it was said, "that she was a good tempered lady, of an ill tempered religion."—If we understand this comparison, intended doubtless as a compliment for our Orthodox sisters, and which it cost the author apparently no little trouble to present, the meaning is this, "They are very good tempered, but their religion is ill tempered. Consequently *they are better than their religion.*" But if this is his meaning, he may rest assured, that Orthodox females can receive no such compliment from him. They good tempered, but their religion ill tempered! They better than their religion! The idea will shock them, and fill them with horror! It is their daily lamentation before God in secret, that they come so far short of their holy religion, in strictness, in purity, in devotedness, in every thing. Their religion is to them the high standard of perfection, comprizing all that is "fair, and lovely, and of good report;" and while they know that they are very far from having yet attained, or from being already perfect, like the great Apostle, they "forget those things which are behind, and reach forth unto those which are before, and press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

We conclude this review, which has been protracted far beyond

the limits originally prescribed, with two general remarks; the first relating to the manner in which it has been conducted; and the second, to the importance of the questions at issue between us. —We offer no apology for what we have written, on the ground of its having been prepared in haste, and amidst almost numberless interruptions; for, though an apology of this nature could never be made probably with more justice, with intelligent readers it would not, and we soberly think should not, excuse palpable failures, in point of execution.—In remarking upon the publications which have been before us, we have practised nothing like disguise or reserve. We have expressed our sentiments with frankness and confidence, feeling strongly supported by the scriptures, and by a consciousness of the goodness of our cause. We have spoken always plainly, and sometimes, it will be thought perhaps, unguardedly; but have not intended to treat our Unitarian neighbors with undue severity, or their publications with unfairness. We have freely awarded commendation, where we felt that it was due, and have as freely controverted and even censured, where truth and a good conscience seemed to require it.

The questions at issue between us and Unitarians are certainly of very great and solemn moment. Unlike some which are agitated on the subject of religion, these take hold upon the essentials of

the Gospel—upon the vital interests of the soul. They respect the Supreme Being, the great object of love, of worship, of confidence, of joy, to all dutiful creatures throughout the universe. They respect the natural character and condition of man, and his necessity of a radical change in his moral affections, in order to see the kingdom of God. They respect the personal dignity and glory of the Saviour; the object for which he came into the world; and the nature of the work which he here accomplished. They respect the foundation of the sinner's hope, the one party laying it in the atoning blood of Christ, and the other in the merits of the creature, or in the unsatisfied mercy of the Creator. They reach even to the future world, and respect the degree and duration of that fearful punishment which awaits the wicked beyond the grave. If questions such as these are trifles, all religion must be a trifle. The immortal soul, on this ground, is a trifle, and salvation and damnation are words without meaning. Let all then feel, when they reflect on this controversy, that it is a great one, a solemn one, one in which each for himself has a deep, an awful, a personal concern. And let all those consider, who are called in providence to take a stand respecting it one way or the other, that their determination involves interests lasting as eternity, and precious as the undying soul.



